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A

HISTORY

OF

BRITISH BIRDS.

THE FIGURES ENGRAVED ON WOOD BY T. BEWICK.

CCC6

VOL. I.

CONTAINING THE

HISTORY AND DESCRIPTION OF LAND BIRDS.

NEWCASTLE:

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PREFACE.

To those who attentively consider the subject of Natural History, as displayed in the animal creation, it will appear, that though much has been done to explore the intricate paths of Nature, and follow her through all her various windings, much yet remains to be done before the great œconomy is completely developed. Notwithstanding the laborious and not unsuccessful inquiries of ingenious men in all ages, the subject is far from being exhausted. Systems have been formed and exploded, and new ones have appeared in their stead; but, like skeletons injudiciously put together, they give but an imperfect idea of that order and symmetry to which they are intended to be subservient: they have, however, their use, but it is chiefly the skilful practitioner who is enabled to profit by them; to the less informed they appear obscure and perplexing, and too frequently deter him from the great object of his pursuit.

To investigate, with any tolerable degree of success, the more retired and distant parts of the animal œconomy, is a task of no small difficulty. An enquiry so desirable and so eminently useful would require the united efforts of many to give it the desired success. Men of leisure, of all descriptions, residing in the country, could scarcely find a more delightful employment than in attempting to elucidate, from their own observations, the various branches of Natural

History, and in communicating them to others. Something like a society in each county, for the purpose of collecting a variety of these observations, as well as for general correspondence, would be extremely useful. Much might be expected from a combination of this kind, extending through every part of the kingdom; a general mode of communication might be thereby established, in order to ascertain the changes which are continually taking place, particularly among the feathered tribes; the times of their appearing and disappearing would be carefully noted; the differences of age, sex, food, &c. would claim a particular degree of attention, and would be the means of correcting the errors which have crept into the works of some of the most eminent ornithologists, from an over-anxious desire of increasing the number of species: but it is reserved, perhaps, for times of greater tranquillity, when the human mind, undisturbed by public calamities, shall find leisure to employ itself, without interruption, in the pursuit of those objects which enlarge its powers and give dignity to its exertions, to carry into the fullest effect a plan for investigations of this sort.

As a naturalist no author has been more successful than the celebrated Count de Buffon: despising the restraints which methodical arrangements generally impose, he ranges at large through the various walks of Nature, and describes her with a brilliancy of colouring which only the most lively imagination could suggest. It must, however, be allowed, that in many instances this ingenious philosopher has overstepped the bounds of Nature, and, in giving the reins to his own luxuriant fancy, has been too frequently hurried into the wild paths of conjecture and romance. The late Mr White, of Selborne, has added much to the general stock of knowledge on this delightful subject, by attentively and faithfully recording whatever fell under his own observation, and by liberal communications to others.

As far as we could, consistently with the plan laid down in the following work, we have consulted, and we trust with some advantage, the works of these and other naturalists. In the arrangement of the various classes, as well as in the descriptive part, we have taken as a guide, our ingenious countryman Mr Pennant, to whose elegant and useful labours the world is indebted for a fund of the most rational entertainment, and who will be remembered by every lover of Nature as long as her works have power to charm. The communications with which we have been favoured by those gentlemen who were so good as to notice our growing work, have been generally acknowledged, each in its proper place; it remains only that we be permitted to insert this testimony of our grateful sense of them.

In a few instances we have ventured to depart from the usual method of classification: by placing the hard-billed birds, or those which live chiefly on seeds, next to those of the Pie kind, there seems to be a more regular gradation downwards, since only a few anomalous birds, such as the Cuckoo, Hoopoe, Nuthatch, &c. intervene. The soft-billed birds, or those which subsist chiefly on worms, insects, and such like, are by this mode placed all together, beginning with those of the Lark kind. To this we must observe, that, by dividing the various families of birds into two grand divisions, viz. Land and Water, a number of tribes have thereby been included among the latter, which can no otherwise be denominated Water Birds than as they occasionally seek their food in moist places, by small streamlets, or on the sea-shore; such as the Curlew, Woodcock, Snipe, Sandpiper, and many others. These, with such as do not commit themselves wholly to the waters, are thrown into a separate division, under the denomination of Waders. To this class we have ventured to remove the Kingfisher, and the Water Ouzel: the former lives entirely on fish, is constantly found

on the margins of still waters, and may with greater propriety be denominated a Water Bird than many which come under that description; the latter seems to have no connection with those birds among which it is usually classed; it is generally found among rapid running streams, in which it chiefly delights, and from which it derives its support.

It may be proper to observe, that while one of the editors of this work was engaged in preparing the cuts, which are faithfully drawn from Nature, and engraved upon wood, the compilation of the descriptions *(of the Land Birds)* was undertaken by the other, subject, however, to the corrections of his friend, whose habits had led him to a more intimate acquaintance with this branch of Natural History: the compiler, therefore, is answerable for the defects which may be found in this part of the undertaking, concerning which he has little to say, but that it was the production of those hours which could be spared from a laborious employment, and on that account he hopes the severity of criticism will be spared, and that it will be received with that indulgence which has been already experienced on a former occasion.

Newcastle upon Tyne, September, 1797.

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INTRODUCTION

TO THE

HISTORY OF BRITISH LAND BIRDS.

In no part of the animal creation are the wisdom, the goodness, and the bounty of Providence displayed in a more lively manner than in the structure, formation, and various endowments of the feathered tribes. The symmetry and elegance discoverable in their outward appearance, although highly pleasing to the sight, are yet of much greater importance when considered with respect to their peculiar habits and modes of living, to which they are eminently subservient.

Instead of the large head and formidable jaws, the deep capacious chest, the brawny shoulders, and sinewy legs of the quadrupeds, we observe the pointed beak, the long and pliant neck, the gently-swelling shoulder, the expansive wings, the tapering tail, the light and bony feet; which are all wisely calculated to assist and accelerate their motion through the yielding air. Every part of their frame is formed for lightness and buoyancy; their bodies are covered with a soft and delicate plumage, so disposed as to protect them from the intense cold of the atmosphere through which they pass; their wings are made of the lightest materials, and yet the force with which they strike the air is so great as to impel their bodies forward with astonishing rapidity, whilst the tail serves the purpose of a rudder to direct them to the different objects of their pursuit. The internal structure of birds is no less wisely adapted to the same purposes; all the bones are light and thin, and all the muscles, except those which are appropriated to the purpose of moving the wings, are extremely delicate and light; the lungs are placed close to the back-bone and ribs; the air, entering into them by a communication from the windpipe, passes through, and is conveyed into a number of membraneous cells which lie upon the sides of the pericardium, and communicate with those of the sternum. In some birds these cells are continued down the wings, and extended even to the pinions thigh-bones, and other parts of the body, which can be filled and distended with air at the pleasure of the animal.

The extreme singularity of this almost universal diffusion of air through the bodies of birds, has excited a strong desire to discover the intention of Nature in producing a conformation so extraordinary. The ingenious Mr Hunter imagined that it might be intended to assist the animal in the act of flying, by increasing its bulk and strength, without adding to its weight. This opinion was corroborated by

considering, that the feathers of birds, and particularly those of the wings, contain a great quantity of air. In opposition to this, he informs us that the Ostrich, which does not fly, is nevertheless provided with air-cells dispersed through its body; that the Woodcock, and some other flying birds, are not so liberally supplied with these cells; yet, he elsewhere observes, that it may be laid down as a general rule, that in birds who are enabled to take the highest and longest flights, as the Eagle, this extension or diffusion of air is carried further than in others; and, with regard to the Ostrich, though it is deprived of the power of flying, it runs with amazing rapidity, and consequently requires similar resources of air. It seems therefore to be proved, evidently, that this general diffusion of air through the bodies of birds is of infinite use to them, not only in their long and laborious flights, but likewise in preventing their respiration from being stopped or interrupted by the rapidity of their motion through a resisting medium. Were it possible for man to move with the swiftness of a Swallow, the actual resistance of the air, as he is not provided with internal reservoirs similar to those of birds, would soon suffocate him.*

Birds may be distinguished, like quadrupeds, into two kinds or classes—granivorous and carnivorous; like quadrupeds too, there are some that hold a middle nature, and partake of both. Granivorous birds are furnished with larger intestines, and proportionally longer, than those of the carnivorous kind. Their food, which consists of grain of various sorts, is conveyed whole and entire into the first stomach

* May not this universal diffusion of air through the bodies of birds, account for the superior heat of this class of animals? The separation of oxygen from respirable air, and its mixture with the blood by means of the lungs, is supposed, by the ingenious Dr Crawford, to be the efficient cause of animal heat.

or craw, where it undergoes a partial dilution by a liquor secreted from the glands and spread over its surface; it is then received into another species of stomach, where it is further diluted; after which it is transmitted into the gizzard, or true stomach, consisting of two very strong muscles, covered externally with a tendinous substance, and lined with a thick membrane of prodigious power and strength: in this place the food is completely triturated, and rendered fit for the operation of the gastric juices. The extraordinary powers of the gizzard in comminuting the food, so as to prepare it for digestion, would exceed all credibility, were they not supported by incontrovertible facts founded upon experiments. In order to ascertain the strength of these stomachs, the ingenious Spalanzani made the following curious and very interesting experiments:—Tin tubes, full of grain, were forced into the stomachs of Turkies, and after remaining twenty hours, were found to be broken, compressed, and distorted in the most irregular manner.* In proceeding further the same author relates, that the stomach of a Cock, in the space of twenty-four hours, broke off the angles of a piece of rough jagged glass, and upon examining the gizzard, no wound or laceration appeared. Twelve strong needles were firmly fixed in a ball of lead, the points of which projected about a quarter of an inch from the surface; thus armed, it was covered with a case of paper, and forced down the throat of a Turkey; the bird retained it a day and a half, without shewing the least symptom of uneasiness; the points of all the needles were broken off close to the surface of the ball, except two or three, of which the stumps projected a little. The same author relates another experiment, seemingly still more cruel: he fixed twelve small lancets, very sharp, in a similar ball of lead, which was given in the sam-

* Spalanzani's Dissertations, vol. 1, page 12.

manner to a Turkey-cock, and left eight hours in the stomach; at the expiration of which the organ was opened, but nothing appeared except the naked ball, the twelve lancets having been broken to pieces, the stomach remaining perfectly sound and entire. From these curious and well-attested facts we may conclude, that the stones so often found in the stomachs of many of the feathered tribes, are highly useful in comminuting grain and other hard substances which constitute their food. "The stones," says the celebrated Mr Hunter, "assist in grinding down the grain, and, by separating its parts, allow the gastric juices to come more readily into contact with it." Thus far the conclusion coincides with the experiments which have just been related. We may observe still further, that stones thus taken into the stomachs of birds are seldom known to pass with the fæces, but being ground down and separated by the powerful action of the gizzard, are mixed with the food, and, no doubt, contribute essentially to the health of the animal.

Granivorous birds partake much of the nature and disposition of herbivorous quadrupeds. In both, the number of their stomachs, the length and capacity of their intestines, and the quality of their food, are very similar; they are likewise both distinguished by the gentleness of their tempers and manners. Contented with the seeds of plants, with fruits, insects, and worms, their chief attention is directed to procuring food, hatching and rearing their offspring, and avoiding the snares of men, and the attacks of birds of prey, and other rapacious animals. They are a mild and gentle race, and are in general so tractable as easily to be domesticated. Man, attentive and watchful to every thing conducive to his interest, has not failed to avail himself of these dispositions, and has judiciously selected from the numbers which every way surround him, those which are most prolific, and consequently most profitable: of these the Hen, the Goose, the Turkey,

and the Duck are the most considerable, and form an inexhaustible store of rich, wholesome, and nutritious food.

Carnivorous birds are distinguished by those endowments and powers with which they are furnished by Nature for the purpose of procuring their food: they are provided with wings of great length, the muscles which move them being proportionally large and strong, whereby they are enabled to keep long upon the wing in search of their prey; they are armed with strong hooked bills, and sharp and formidable claws; they have also large heads, short necks, strong and brawny thighs, and a sight so acute and piercing, as to enable them to view their prey from the greatest heights in the air, upon which they dart with inconceivable swiftness and undeviating aim; their stomachs are smaller than those of the granivorous kinds, and their intestines are much shorter. The analogy between the structure of rapacious birds and carnivorous quadrupeds is obvious; both of them are provided with weapons which indicate destruction and rapine; their manners are fierce and unsocial; and they seldom live together in flocks, like the inoffensive granivorous tribes. When not on the wing, rapacious birds retire to the tops of sequestered rocks, or to the depths of extensive forests, where they conceal themselves in sullen and gloomy solitude. Those which feed on carrion are endowed with a sense of smelling so exquisite, as to enable them to scent putrid carcases at astonishing distances.

Without the means of conveying themselves with great swiftness from one place to another, birds could not easily subsist: the food which Nature has so bountifully provided for them is so irregularly distributed, that they are obliged to take long journies to distant parts in order to gain the necessary supplies: at one time it is given in great abundance; at another it is administered with a very sparing hand; and this is one cause of those migrations so peculiar to the

feathered tribes. Besides the want of food, there are two other causes of migration, viz. the want of a proper temperature of air, and a convenient situation for the great work of breeding and rearing their young. Such birds as migrate to great distances are alone denominated *birds of passage;* but most birds are, in some measure, birds of passage, although they do not migrate to places remote from their former habitations. At particular times of the year most birds remove from one country to another, or from the more inland districts towards the shores: the times of these migrations or flittings are observed with the most astonishing order and punctuality; but the secrecy of their departure, and the suddenness of their re-appearance, have involved the subject of migration in general in great difficulty. Much of this difficulty arises from our not being able to account for their means of subsistence during the long flights of many of those birds which are obliged to cross immense tracts of water before they arrive at the places of their destination: accustomed to measure distance by the speed of those animals with which we are well acquainted, we are apt to overlook the superior velocity with which birds are carried forward in the air, and the ease with which they continue their exertions, for a much longer time than can be done by the strongest quadruped.

Our swiftest horses are supposed to go at the rate of a mile in somewhat less than two minutes; and we have one instance on record of a horse being tried, which went at the rate of nearly a mile in one minute, but that was only for the small space of a second of time.* In this and similar instances we find, that an uncommon degree of exertion is attended with its usual consequences, debility, and a total want of power to continue that exertion; but the case is very different with

* See History of Quadrupeds, page 6, 3d edition.

birds; their motions are not impeded by similar causes, they glide through the air with a quick[illegible] superior to that of the swiftest quadruped, and they can continue on the wing with equal speed for a considerable length of time. Now, if we can suppose a bird to go at the rate of only a mile in a minute, for the space of twenty-four hours, it have gone over, in that time, an extent of more than seven hundred miles, which is sufficient to account for almost the longest migration; but if aided by a favourable current of air, there is a reason to suppose that the same journey may be performed in a much shorter space of time. To these observations we may add, that the sight of birds is peculiarly quick and piercing; and from the advantage they possess in being raised to considerable heights in the air, they are enabled, with a sagacity peculiar to instinctive knowledge, to discover the route they are to take, from the appearance of the atmosphere, the clouds, the direction of the winds, and other causes; so that, without having recourse to improbable modes, it is easy to conceive, from the velocity of their speed alone, that most birds may transport themselves to countries lying at great distances, and across vast tracts of ocean.

The following observations from Catesby are very applicable, and will conclude our remarks on this head:—"The manner of their journeyings may vary according as the structure of their bodies enables them to support themselves in the air. Birds with short wings, such as the Redstart, Blackcap, &c. may pass by gradual and slower movements; and there seems no necessity for a precipitate passage, as every day affords an increase of warmth, and a continuance of food. It is probable these itinerants may perform their journey in the night time, in order to avoid ravenous birds, and other dangers which day-light may expose them to. The flight of the smaller birds of passage across the seas has, by many, been considered as wonderful, and especially with

regard to those with short wings, among which Quails seem, by their structure, adapted for long flights; nor are they ever seen to continue on the wing for any length of time, and yet their migration for such flights cannot be doubted. The coming of these birds is certain and regular from every year's experience, but the cause and manner of their departure have not always been so happily accounted for; in short, all we know of the matter ends in this observation,—that Providence has created a great variety of birds and other animals with constitutions and inclinations adapted to their several wants and necessities, as well as to the different degrees of heat and cold in the several climates of the world, whereby no country is destitute of inhabitants, and has given them appetites for the productions of those countries whose temperature is suited to their nature, as well as knowledge and ability to seek and find them out."

The migration of the Swallow tribe has been noticed by almost every writer on the natural history of birds, and various opinions have been formed respecting their disappearance, and the state in which they exist during that interval. Some naturalists suppose that they do not leave this island at the end of autumn, but that they lie in a torpid state, till the beginning of summer, in the banks of rivers, in the hollows of decayed trees, in holes and crevices of old buildings, in sand banks, and the like: some have even asserted that Swallows pass the winter immersed in the waters of lakes and rivers, where they have been found in clusters, mouth to mouth, wing to wing, foot to foot, and that they retire to these places in autumn, and creep down the reeds to their subaqueous retreats. In support of this opinion, Mr Klein very gravely asserts, on the credit of some countrymen, that Swallows sometimes assemble in numbers, clinging to a reed till it breaks, and sinks with them to the bottom; that their immersion is preceded by a song or dirge, which lasts more

than a quarter of an hour; that sometimes they lay hold of a straw with their bills, and plunge down in society; and that others form a large mass, by clinging together by the feet, and in this manner commit themselves to the deep. It requires no great depth of reasoning to refute such palpable absurdities, or to shew the physical impossibility of a body, specifically lighter than water, employing another body lighter than itself for the purpose of immersion: but, admitting the possibility of this curious mode of immersion, it is by no means probable that Swallows, or any other animal in a torpid state, can exist for any length of time in an element to which they have never been accustomed, and for which they are totally unprovided by Nature with suitable organs.

The celebrated Mr John Hunter informs us, "that he had dissected many Swallows, but found nothing in them different from other birds as to the organs of respiration;" and therefore concludes that it is highly absurd to suppose, that terrestrial animals can remain any long time under water without being drowned. It must not, however, be denied that Swallows have been sometimes found in a torpid state during the winter months; but such instances are by no means common, and will not support the inference, that, if any of them can survive the winter in that state, the whole species is preserved in the same manner.* That other birds

* There are various instances on record, which carry with them marks of veracity, of Swallows having been taken out of water, and of their having been so far recovered by warmth as to exhibit evident signs of life, so as even to fly about for a short space of time. But whilst we admit the fact, we are not inclined to allow the conclusion generally drawn from it, viz. that Swallows, at the time of their disappearance, frequently immerse themselves in seas, lakes, and rivers, and at the proper season emerge and reassume the ordinary functions of life and animation; for, it should be observed, that in those instances which have been the best authenticated, [See Forster's Translation of Kalm's Travels into

have been found in a torpid state may be inferred from the following curious fact, which was communicated to us by a gentleman who saw the bird, and had the account from the person who found it. A few years ago, a young Cuckoo was found in the thickest part of a close furze bush; when taken up it presently discovered signs of life, but was quite destitute of feathers; being kept warm, and carefully fed, it grew and recovered its coat of feathers: in the spring following it made its escape, and in flying across the river Tyne it gave its usual call. We have observed a single Swallow so late as the latter end of October; others assert that they have often been seen till near Christmas. Mr White, in his Natural History of Selborne, mentions having seen a House Martin flying about in November, long after the general migration had taken place. Many more instances might be given of such late appearances, which, added to the well-authenticated accounts of Swallows having been actually found in a torpid state, leave us no room to doubt, that such

North America, p. 140—note.] it appears, that the Swallows so taken up were generally found entangled amongst reeds and rushes, by the sides, or in the shallowest parts, of the lakes or rivers where they happened to be discovered, and that, having been brought to life so far as to fly about, they all of them died in a few hours after. From the facts thus stated, we would infer, that at the time of the disappearance of Swallows, the reedy grounds by the sides of rivers and standing waters are generally dry, and that these birds, especially the latter hatchings, which frequent such places for the sake of food, retire to them at the proper season, and lodge themselves among the roots, or in the thickest parts of the rank grass which grows there; that during their state of torpidity they are liable to be covered with water, from the rains which follow, and are sometimes washed into the deeper parts of the lake or river where they have been accidentally taken up; and that probably the transient signs of life which they have discovered on such occasions, have given rise to a variety of vague and improbable accounts of their immersion, &c.

young birds as were late hatched, and consequently not strong enough to undertake a long voyage to the coast of Africa, are left behind, and remain concealed in hiding places till the return of spring: on the other hand, that actual migrations of the Swallow tribe do take place, has been fully proved from a variety of well-attested facts, most of which are taken from the observations of navigators who were eye-witnesses of their flights, and whose ships have sometimes afforded a resting place to the weary travellers.

To the many on record we shall add the following, which we received from a very sensible master of a vessel, who, whilst he was sailing early in the spring between the islands of Minorca and Majorca, saw great numbers of Swallows flying northward, many of which alighted on the rigging of the ship in the evening, but disappeared before morning. After all our inquiries into this branch of natural œconomy, much yet remains to be known, and we may conclude in the words of the ingenious Mr White, "that whilst we observe with delight with how much ardour and punctuality those little birds obey the strong impulse towards migration or hiding, imprinted on their minds by their great Creator, it is with no small degree of mortification we reflect, that after all our pains and inquiries, we are not yet quite certain to what regions they do migrate, and are still farther embarrassed to find that some actually do not migrate at all."

"Amusive birds! say where your hid retreat,
"When the frost rages, and the tempests beat;
"Whence your return, by such nice instinct led,
"When Spring, sweet season, lifts her bloomy head?
"Such baffled searches mock man's prying pride,
"The God of Nature is your secret guide!"

Most birds, at certain seasons, live together in pairs; the union is formed in the spring, and generally continues whilst the united efforts of both are necessary in forming their

temporary habitations, and in rearing and maintaining their offspring. Eagles and other birds of prey continue their attachment for a much longer time, and sometimes for life. The nests of birds are constructed with such exquisite art, as to exceed the utmost exertion of human ingenuity to imitate them. Their mode of building, the materials they make use of, as well as the situations they select, are as various as the different kinds of birds, and are all admirably adapted to their several wants and necessities. Birds of the same species, whatever region of the globe they inhabit, collect the same materials, arrange them in the same manner, and make choice of similar situations for fixing the places of their temporary abodes. To describe minutely the different kinds of nests, the various substances of which they are composed, and the judicious choice of situations, would swell this part of our work much beyond its due bounds. Every part of the world furnishes materials for the ærial architects: leaves and small twigs, roots and dried grass, mixed with clay, serve for the external; whilst moss, wool, fine hair, and the softest animal and vegetable downs, form the warm internal part of these commodious dwellings. The following beautiful lines from Thomson are highly descriptive of the busy scene which takes place during the time of nidification:—

" . . . . . Some to the holly hedge,
" Nestling, repair, and to the thicket some;
" Some to the rude protection of the thorn
" Commit their feeble offspring: the cleft tree
" Offers its kind concealment to a few,
" Their food its insects, and its moss their nests:
" Others apart, far in the grassy dale
" Or roughening waste their humble texture weave:
" But most in woodland solitudes delight,
" In unfrequented glooms or shaggy banks,
" Steep, and divided by a babbling brook,
" Whose murmurs soothe them all the live-long day,

" When by kind duty fix'd. Among the roots
" Of hazel, pendent o'er the plaintive stream,
" They frame the first foundation of their domes,
" Dry sprigs of trees, in artful fabric laid,
" And bound with clay together. Now 'tis nought
" But restless hurry through the busy air,
" Beat by unnumber'd wings. The Swallow sweeps
" The slimy pool, to build the hanging house
" Intent: and often from the careless back
" Of herds and flocks a thousand tugging bills
" Pluck hair and wool; and oft, when unobserved,
" Steal from the barn a straw; till soft and warm,
" Clean and complete, their habitation grows."

After the business of incubation is over, and the young are sufficiently able to provide for themselves, the nests are always abandoned by the parents, excepting by those of the Eagle kind.

The various gifts and endowments which the great Author of Nature has so liberally bestowed upon his creatures in general, demand, in a peculiar manner, the attention of the curious Naturalist; among the feathered tribes in particular, there is much room, in this respect, for minute and attentive investigation. In pursuing our inquiries into that system of œconomy, by which every part of Nature is upheld and preserved, we are struck with wonder in observing the havock and destruction which every where prevail throughout the various orders of beings inhabiting the earth. Our humanity is interested in that law of Nature which devotes to destruction myriads of creatures to support and continue the existence of others; but although it is not allowed us to unravel the mysterious workings of Nature through all her parts, or unfold her deep designs, we are, nevertheless, strongly led to the consideration of the means by which individuals, as well as species, are preserved. The weak are frequently enabled to elude the pursuits of the strong by flight or stratagem;

some are screened from the pursuits of their enemies by an arrangement of colours happily assimilated to the places which they most frequent, and where they find either food or repose: thus the Wryneck is scarcely to be distinguished from the bark of the tree on which it feeds; or the Snipe from the soft and mossy ground by the springs of water which it frequents: the Great Plover finds its chief security in stony places, to which its colours are so nicely adapted, that the most exact observer may be very easily deceived. The attentive ornithologist will not fail to discover numerous instances of this kind, such as the Partridge, Plover, Quail, &c.

Some are indebted to the brilliancy of their colours as the means of alluring their prey; of this the Kingfisher is a remarkable instance, and deserves to be particularly noticed. This beautiful bird has been observed, in some sequestered place near the edge of a rivulet, exposing the vivid colours of its breast to the full rays of the sun, and fluttering with expanded wings over the smooth surface of the water; the fish, attracted by the brightness and splendour of the appearance, are detained whilst the wily bird darts down upon them with unerring aim. We do not say that the mode of taking fish by torch-light has been derived from this practised by the Kingfisher, but every one must be struck by the similarity of the means. Others, again, derive the same advantage from the simplicity of their exterior appearance; of this the Heron will serve for an example. He may frequently be seen standing motionless by the edge of a piece of water, waiting patiently the approach of his prey, which he never fails to seize as soon as it comes within reach of his long neck; he then reassumes his former position, and continues to wait with the same patient attention as before.

Most of the smaller birds are supported, especially when young, by a profusion of caterpillars, small worms, and

insects; on these they feed, and thus they contribute to preserve the vegetable world from destruction. This is contrary to the commonly received opinion, that birds, particularly Sparrows, do much mischief in destroying the labours of the gardener and the husbandman. It has been observed, "that a single pair of Sparrows, during the time they are feeding their young, will destroy about four thousand caterpillars weekly; they likewise feed their young with butterflies and other winged insects, each of which, if not destroyed in this manner, would be productive of several hundreds of caterpillars." Swallows are almost continually upon the wing, and in their curious winding flights destroy immense quantities of flies and other insects, which are continually floating in the air, and which, if not destroyed by these birds, would render it unfit for the purposes of life and health.

That active little bird the Tomtit, which is generally supposed hostile to the young and tender buds that appear in the spring, when attentively observed, may be seen running up and down among the branches, and picking up the eggs of insects, or the small worms that are concealed in the blossoms, and which would effectually destroy the fruit. As the season advances, various other small birds, such as the Redbreast, Wren, Winter Fauvette or Hedge-sparrow, Whitethroat, Redstart, &c. are all engaged in the same useful work, and may be observed examining every leaf, and feeding upon the insects which they find beneath them. These are a few instances of that superintending providential care, which is continually exerted in preserving the various ranks and orders of beings in the scale of animated Nature; and although it is permitted that myriads of individuals should every moment be destroyed, not a single species is lost, but every link of the great chain remains unbroken.

Great Britain produces a more abundant variety of birds than most northern countries, owing to the various condition

of our lands, from the highest state of cultivation to that of the wildest, most mountainous, and woody. The great quantities of berries and other kinds of fruit produced in our hedges, heaths, and plantations, bring small birds in great numbers, and birds of prey in consequence: our shores, and the numerous little islands adjacent to them, afford shelter and protection to an infinite variety of almost all kinds of water fowl. To enumerate the various kinds of birds that visit this island annually will not, we presume, be unacceptable to our readers, nor improper in this part of our work. The following are selected chiefly from Mr White's Natural History of Selborne, and are arranged nearly in the order of their appearing.

1 Wryneck, ... Middle of March
2 Smallest Willow Wren, ... Latter end of ditto
3 House Swallow, ... Middle of April
4 Martin, ... Ditto
5 Sand Martin, ... Ditto
6 Blackcap, ... Ditto
7 Nightingale, ... Beginning of April
8 Cuckoo, ... Middle of ditto
9 Middle Willow Wren, ... Ditto
10 Whitethroat, ... Ditto
11 Redstart, ... Ditto.
12 Great Plover or Stone Curlew, End of March
13 Grasshopper Lark, ... Middle of April
14 Swift, ... Latter end of ditto
15 Lesser Red Sparrow, ...
16 Corn Crake or Land Rail, . .
17 Largest Willow Wren, ... End of April
18 Fern Owl, ... Latter end of May
19 Flycatcher, ... Middle of ditto.*

* This, according to Mr White, is the latest summer bird of passage but the arrival of some of the summer birds is very uncertain: those

To this list of migratory birds, some ornithologists have added the Larks, Ouzels, Thrushes, and Starlings.

Most of the soft-billed birds feed on insects, and not on grain or seeds, and therefore usually retire before winter; but the following, though they eat insects, remain with us during the whole year, viz. The Redbreast, Winter Fauvette, and Wren, which frequent out-houses and gardens, and eat spiders, small worms, crumbs, &c.; the Pied, the Yellow, and the Grey Wagtail, which frequent the heads of springs, where the waters seldom freeze, and feed on the aureliæ of insects usually deposited there. Beside these, the Winchat, the Stonechat, and the Golden-crested Wren, are seen with us during the winter; the latter, though the least of all the British birds, is very hardy, and can endure the utmost severity of our winters. The Whiterump, though not common, sometimes stays the winter with us.—Of the winter birds of passage, the following are the principal, viz.

1. The Redwing, or Wind Thrush.

2. The Fieldfare.—[Both these arrive in great numbers about Michaelmas, and depart about the end of February, or beginning of March, but are sometimes detained by easterly winds till the middle of April.]

3. The Hooded, or Sea Crow, visits us in the beginning of winter, and departs with the Woodcock.

4. The Woodcock appears about Michaelmas, and leaves us about the beginning of March, but is sometimes detained till the middle of April.

5. Snipes are considered by Mr White as birds of passage, though he acknowledges that they frequently breed with us. Mr Pennant remarks, that their young are so frequently found in Britain, that it may be doubted whether they ever entirely leave this island.

which are the first in some seasons, are the last in others: this can only be determined by their song.

6. The Judcock, or Jack Snipe.

7. The Wood Pigeon.—[Of the precise time of its arrival we are not quite certain, but suppose it may be some time in April, as we have seen them in the north at that time. Some ornithologists assert that they do not migrate.]

8. The Wild Swan frequents the coasts of this island in large flocks, but is not supposed to breed with us. It has been chiefly met with in the northern parts, and is said to arrive at Lingey, one of the Hebrides, in October, and to remain there till March, when it retires more northward to breed.

9. The Wild Goose passes southward in October, and returns northward in April.*

With regard to the Duck kind in general, they are mostly birds of passage. Mr Pennant says, "Of the numerous species that form this genus, we know of no more than five that breed here, viz. the Tame Swan, the Tame Goose, the Shield Duck, the Eider Duck, and a very small number of the Wild Ducks: the rest contribute to form that amazing multitude of water fowls that annually repair from most parts of Europe to the woods and lakes of Lapland and other arctic regions, there to perform the functions of incubation and nutrition in full security. They and their young quit their retreats in September, and disperse themselves over Europe. With us they make their appearance in the beginning of October, circulate first round our shores, and when compelled by severe frost, betake themselves to our lakes and rivers."—In winter the Bernacles and Brent Geese appear in

* Sometimes, for reasons not yet accounted for by naturalists, they return northward at the latter end of the year.

A flock passed over Newcastle northward on the 6th of December, 1813.

Another passed on the 22d of December, 1813.

Another on the 25th of November, 1814.

And one passed *southward* on the 12th of December, 1814.

last flocks on the north-west coast of Britain, and leave us in February, when they migrate as far as Lapland, Greenland, or Spitzbergen.

The Solan Geese or Gannets are birds of passage; their first appearance is in March, and they continue till August or September. The long-legged Plover and Sanderling visit us in winter only; and it is worthy of remark, that every species of the Curlews, Woodcocks, Sandpipers, and Plovers, which forsake us in the spring, retire to Sweden, Poland, Russia, Norway, and Lapland, to breed, and return to us as soon as the young are able to fly; for the frosts, which set in early in those countries, deprive them totally of the means of subsistence.

Beside these, there is a great variety of birds which perform partial migrations, or flittings, from one part of the country to another. During hard winters, when the surface of the earth is covered with snow, many birds, such as Larks, Snipes, &c. withdraw from the inland parts of the country towards the sea-shores, in quest of food; others, as the Wren, the Redbreast, and a variety of small birds, quit the fields, and approach the habitations of men. The Bohemian Chatterer, the Grosbeak, and the Crossbill, are only occasional visitors, and observe no regular times in making their appearance. Great numbers of the Bohemian Chatterer were taken in the county of Northumberland in the latter end of the years 1789 and 1790, before which they had seldom been observed so far south as that county, and since that time they have rarely visited it.

The term of life varies greatly in birds, and does not seem to bear the same proportion to the time of acquiring their growth, as has been remarked with regard to quadrupeds. Most birds acquire their full dimensions in a few months, and are capable of propagation the first summer after they are hatched. In proportion to the size of their bodies, birds,

possess more vitality, and live longer, than either man or quadrupeds: notwithstanding the difficulties which arise in ascertaining the ages of birds, there are instances of great longevity in many of them. Geese and Swans have been known to attain to the age of seventy and upwards; Ravens are very long-lived birds, they are said sometimes to exceed a century; Eagles are supposed to arrive at a great age; Pigeons are known to live more than twenty years; and even Linnets and other small birds have been kept in cages from fifteen to twenty years.

To the practical ornithologist there arises a considerable gratification in being able to ascertain the distinguishing characters of birds as they appear at a distance, whether at rest, or during their flight; for not only every genus has something peculiar to itself, but each species has its own appropriate marks, by which a judicious observer may discriminate almost with certainty. Of these, the various modes of flight afford the most certain and obvious means of distinction, and should be noted with the most careful attention. From the bold and lofty flight of the Eagle, to the short and sudden flittings of the Sparrow or the Wren, there is an ample field for the curious investigator of nature, on which he may dwell with inexpressible delight, tracing the various movements of the feathered nations which every where present themselves to his view. The notes, or, as it may with more propriety be called, the language, of birds, whereby they are enabled to express, in no inconsiderable degree, their various passions, wants, and feelings, must be particularly noticed.* By the great power of their voice, they can communicate their sentiments and intentions to each other, and are enabled to act by mutual concert: that of the wing, by which they can remove from place to place with inconceivable

* White's Selborne.

celerity and dispatch, is peculiar to the feathered tribes; it gives them a decided superiority over every species of quadrupeds, and affords them the greatest means of security from those attacks to which their weakness would otherwise expose them. The social instinct among birds is peculiarly lively and interesting, and likewise proves an effectual means of preservation from the various arts which are made use of to circumvent and destroy them. Individuals may perish, and the species may suffer a diminution of its numbers; but its instincts, habits, and œconomy remain entire.

AN

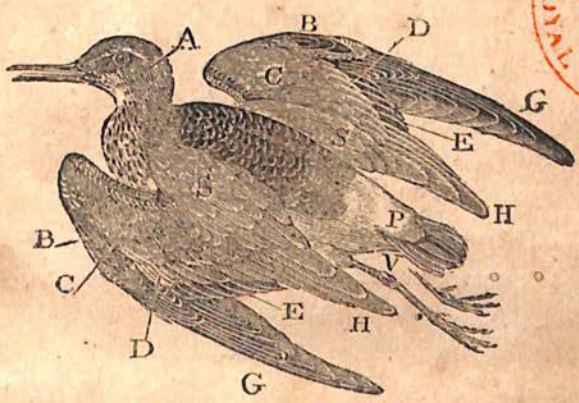
EXPLANATION

OF THE

TECHNICAL TERMS USED IN THIS WORK:

TO WHICH ARE SUBJOINED

SOME OF THOSE USED BY LINNÆUS AND OTHER ORNITHOLOGISTS, DESCRIPTIVE OF THE PARTICULAR PARTS PECULIAR TO SOME SPECIES.



A—AURICULARS,—feathers which cover the ears.

BB—The BASTARD WING, [*alula spuria*, Lin.] three or five quill-like feathers, placed at a small joint rising at the middle part of the wing.

CC—The LESSER COVERTS of the WINGS, [*tectrices primæ*, Lin.] small feathers that lie in several rows on the bones of the wings. The UNDER COVERTS are those that line the inside of the wings.

DD—The GREATER COVERTS, [*tectrices secundæ*, Lin.] the feathers that lie immediately over the quill feathers and the secondaries.

GG—The PRIMARIES, or PRIMARY QUILLS, [*primores*, Lin.] the largest feathers of the wings: they rise from the first bone.

EE—The SECONDARIES, or SECONDARY QUILLS, [*secondariæ*, Lin.] those that rise from the second bone.

HH—The TERTIALS. These also take their rise from the second bone, at the *elbow joint*, forming a continuation of the secondaries, and seem to do the same with the scapulars, which lie over them. These feathers are so long in some of the *Scolopax* and *Tringa* genera, that when the bird is flying they give it the appearance of having four wings.

SS—The SCAPULARS, or SCAPULAR FEATHERS, take their rise from the shoulders, and cover the sides of the back.

P—COVERTS of the TAIL. [*uropygium*, Lin.] These feathers cover it on the upper side, at the base.

V—The VENT FEATHERS, [*crissum*, Lin.] those that lie from the vent, or *anus*, to the tail underneath.

IRIS, (plural IRIDES) the part which surrounds the pupil of the eye.

MANDIBLES,—the upper and under parts of the bill.

COMPRESSED,—flatted at the sides vertically.

DEPRESSED,—flatted horizontally.

CUNEATED,—wedge-shaped.

Head of the Merlin Hawk.

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1—The CERE, [*cera*, Lin.] the naked skin which covers the base of the bill, as in the Hawk kind.

2—The ORBITS, [*orbita*, Lin.] the skin which surrounds the eye. It is generally bare, but particularly in the Parrot and the Heron.

Head of the Great Ash-coloured Shrike.

1—When the bill is notched near the tip, as in Shrikes, Thrushes, &c. it is called by Linnæus *rostrum emarginatum.*

2—*Vibrissæ*, (Lin.) are hairs that stand forward like feelers: in some birds they are slender, as in Flycatchers, &c. and point both upwards and downwards, from both the upper and under sides of the mouth.

3—*Capistrum*,—a word used by Linnæus to express the short feathers on the forehead, just above the bill. In some birds these feathers fall forward over the nostrils: they quite cover those of the Crow.

Rostrum cultratum, (Lin.) when the edges of the bill are very sharp, as in that of the Crow.

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE

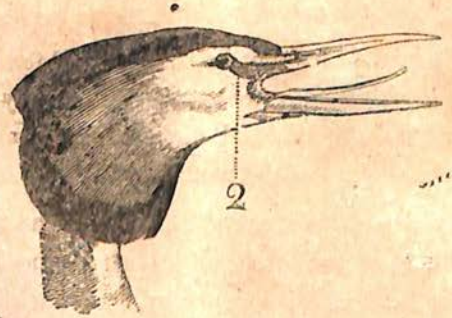
Head of the Night-jar.

1—*Vibrissæ pectinatæ*, (Lin.) These hairs in this bird are very stiff, and spread out on each side like a comb from the upper sides of the mouth only.

Foot of the Night-jar,

Shewing the middle toe claw SERRATED like a saw. PECTINATED signifies toothed like a comb.

Head of the Great-crested Grebe.



2—The LORE, [*Lorum*, Lin.] the space between the bill and the eye, which in this genus is bare, but in other birds is generally covered with feathers.

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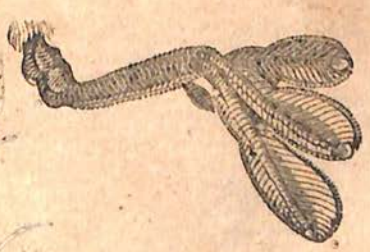
Foot of the Kingfisher

Shewing the peculiar structure, in the toes being joined together from their origin to the end joints.

Foot of the Grey Phalarope.

FIN-FOOTED and SCALLOPED, [*pinnatus*, Lin.] as are also those of the Coots.

Foot of the Red-necked Grebe.



Toes furnished on their sides with broad plain membranes. [*Pes lobatus*, Lin.]

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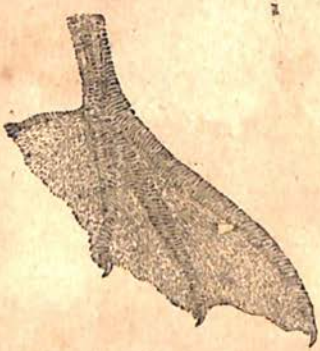
Foot of the Corvorant,



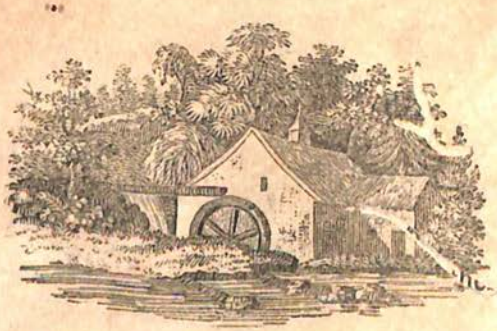
Shewing all the four toes connected by webs.

SEMI-PALMATED, [*semi-palmatus*, Lin.] when the middle of the webs reach only about half the length of the toes.

CILIATED, [*lingua ciliata*, Lin.] when the tongue is edged with fine bristles, as in Ducks.

NOSTRILS LINEAR,—when they are extended lengthwise in a line with the bill, as in Divers, &c.

NOSTRILS PERVIOUS,—when they are open, and may be seen through from side to side, as in Culle, &c.



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BRITISH BIRDS.

BIRDS OF PREY.

Rapacious birds, or those which subsist chiefly on flesh, are much less numerous than ravenous quadrupeds; and it seems wisely provided by nature, that their powers should be equally confined and limited with their numbers; for if to the rapid flight and penetrating eye of the Eagle, were joined the strength and voracious appetite of the Lion, the Tiger, or the Glutton, no artifice could evade the one, and no speed could escape the other.

The characters of birds of the ravenous kind are particularly strong, and easily to be distinguished: the formidable talons, the large head, the strong and crooked beak, indicate their ability for rapine and carnage; their dispositions are fierce, and their nature untractable; unsociable and cruel, they avoid the haunts of civilization, and retire to the most melancholy and wild recesses of nature, where they can enjoy, in gloomy solitude, the effects of their depredatory excursions. The fierceness of their nature extends even to their young, which they drive from the nest at a very early period. The difficulty of procuring a constant supply of food for them sometimes overcomes the feelings of parental affection, and they have been known to destroy them in the fury of

disappointed hunger. Different from all other kinds, the female of birds of prey is larger and stronger than the male: naturalists have puzzled themselves to assign the reason of this extraordinary property, but the final cause at least is obvious,—as the care of rearing her young is solely intrusted to the female, nature has furnished her with more ample powers to provide for her own wants, and those of her offspring.

This formidable tribe consitutes the first order among the genera of birds. Those of our own country consist only of two kinds, viz. the Falcon and the Owl. We shall begin with the former.

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THE FALCON TRIBE.

THE numerous families of which this kind is composed, are found in almost every part of the world, from the frigid to the torrid zone: they are divided into various classes or tribes, consisting of Eagles, Kites, Buzzards, Hawks, &c. and are readily known by the following distinguishing characteristics:—

The bill is strong, sharp, and much hooked, and is furnished with a naked skin or cere situated at the base, in which are placed the nostrils; the head and neck are well cloathed with feathers, which sufficiently distinguish it from every one of the Vulture kind; the legs and feet are scaly; the claws are large and strong, much hooked, and very sharp. Birds of this species are also distinguished by their undaunted courage, and great activity. Buffon, speaking of the Eagle, compares it with the Lion, and ascribes to it the magnanimity, the strength, and the forbearance of that noble quadruped. The Eagle despises small animals, and disregards their insults; he seldom devours the whole of his prey, but, like the Lion, leaves the fragments to other animals: though famishing with hunger, he disdains to feed on carrion. The eyes of the Eagle have the glare of those of the Lion, and are nearly of the same colour; the claws are of the same shape, and the cry of both is powerful and terrible: destined for war and plunder, they are equally fierce, bold, and untractable. Such is the resemblance which that ingenious and fanciful writer has pictured of these two noble animals; the characters of both are striking and prominent, and hence the Eagle is said to

extend his dominion over the birds, as the Lion over the quadrupeds.

The same writer also observes, that, in a state of nature, the Eagle never engages in a solitary chase but when the female is confined to her eggs or her young: at this season the return of the smaller birds affords plenty of prey, and he can with ease provide for the sustenance of himself and his mate; at other times they unite their exertions, and are always seen close together, or at a short distance from each other. They who have an opportunity of observing their motions, say, that the one beats the bushes, whilst the other, perched on an eminence, watches the flight of the prey. They often soar out of the reach of human sight; and, notwithstanding the immense distance, their cry is still heard, and then resembles the barking of a small dog. Though a voracious bird, the Eagle can endure the want of sustenance for a long time. A common Eagle, caught in a fox trap, is said to have passed five whole weeks without the least food, and did not appear sensibly weakened till towards the last week, when a period was put to its existence.

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THE GOLDEN EAGLE.

(*Falco Chrysætos*, Linnæus.—*Le grand Aigle*, Buffon.)

This is the largest of the genus; it measures, from point of the bill to the extremity of the toes, upwards of three feet; and in breadth, from tip to tip of the wings, above eight; and weighs from sixteen to eighteen pounds.

The male is smaller, and does not weigh more than twelve pounds. The bill is of a deep blue colour; the cere yellow: the eyes are large, deep sunk, and covered by a projecting brow; the iris is of a fine bright yellow, and sparkles with uncommon lustre. The general colour is deep brown, mixed with tawny on the head and neck: the quills are chocolate, with white shafts; the tail is black, spotted with ash colour: the legs are yellow, and feathered down to the toes, which are very scaly; the claws are remarkably large; the middle one is two inches in length.

This noble bird is found in various parts of Europe; it abounds most in the warmer regions, and has seldom been met with farther north than the fifty-fifth degree of latitude. It is known to breed in the mountainous parts of Ireland: it lays three, and sometimes four eggs, of which it seldom happens that more than two are prolific. Mr Pennant says there are instances, though rare, of their having bred in Snowdon Hills. Mr Wallis, in his Natural History of Northumberland, says, "it formerly had its aerie on the highest and steepest part of Cheviot. In the beginning of January, 1735, a very large one was shot near Warkworth, which measured, from point to point of its wings, eleven feet and a quarter."

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THE RINGTAILED EAGLE.

(*Falco Fulvus*, Lin.—*L'Aigle Commun.* Buff.)

THIS is the common Eagle of Buffon, and, according to that author, includes two varieties, the Brown and the Black Eagle; they are both of the same brown colour, distinguished only by a deeper shade, and are nearly

of the same size: in both, the upper part of the head and neck is mixed with rust colour, and the base of the larger feathers marked with white; the bill is of a dark horn colour; the cere of a bright yellow; the iris brown; and between the bill and the eye there is a naked skin of a dirty brown colour: the legs are feathered to the toes, which are yellow, and the claws black: the tail is distinguished by a white ring, which covers about two-thirds of its length; the remaining part is black.

The Ringtailed Eagle is more numerous and diffused than the Golden Eagle, and prefers more northern climates. It is found in France, Germany, Switzerland, Great Britain, and in America as far north as Hudson's Bay.

THE WHITE-TAILED EAGLE.

GREAT ERNE, CINEREOUS EAGLE.

(*Falco Albicilla*, Lin.—*Le grand Pygargue*, Buff.)

Of this there appears to be three varieties, which

differ chiefly in size, and consist of the following:—the Great Erne, or Cinereous Eagle, of Latham and Pennant; the Small Erne, or Lesser White-tailed Eagle; and the White-headed Erne, or Bald Eagle. The first two are distinguished only by their size, and the last by the whiteness of its head and neck.

The White-tailed Eagle is inferior in size to the Golden Eagle. The beak, cere, and eyes are of a pale yellow: the space between the beak and the eye is of a bluish colour, and thinly covered with hair: the sides of the head and neck are of a pale ash colour, mixed with reddish brown: the general colour of the plumage is brown, darkest on the upper part of the head, neck, and back; the quill feathers are very dark; the breast is irregularly marked with white spots; the tail is white: the legs, which are of a bright yellow, are feathered a little below the knees; the claws are black.

This bird inhabits all the northern parts of Europe, and is found in Scotland and many parts of Great Britain. It is equal in strength and vigour to the Common Eagle, but more furious; and is said to drive its young ones from the nest, after having fed them only a very short time. It has commonly two or three young, and builds its nest upon lofty trees.

OF THE BOMBAY BRANCH OF THE ASIATIC SOCIETY

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THE SEA EAGLE.

(Falco Ossifragus, Lin.—*L'Orfraie*, Buff.)

This bird is nearly as large as the Golden Eagle, measuring in length three feet and a half, but its expanded wings do not reach above seven feet. Its bill is large, much hooked, and of a bluish colour: irides in

some light hazel, in others yellow: a row of strong bristly feathers hangs down from its under-bill next to its throat, whence it has been termed the Bearded Eagle: the top of the head and back part of the neck are dark brown, inclining to black: the feathers on the back are variegated by a lighter brown, with dark edges; the scapulars are pale brown, the edges nearly white; the breast and belly whitish, with irregular spots of brown; the tail feathers are dark brown, the outer edges of the exterior feathers whitish; the quill feathers and thighs are dusky: the legs and feet yellow; the claws, which are large, and form a complete semicircle, are of a shining black.

It is found in various parts of Europe and America: it is said to lay only two eggs during the whole year, and frequently produces only one young bird: it is however widely dispersed, and was met with at Botany Island by Captain Cook. It lives chiefly on fish: its usual haunts are by the sea-shore; it also frequents the borders of large lakes and rivers; and is said to see so distinctly in the dark, as to be able to pursue and catch its prey during the night. The story of the Eagle, brought to the ground after a severe conflict with a cat, which it had seized and taken up into the air with its talons, is very remarkable. Mr Barlow, who was an eye-witness of the fact, made a drawing of it, which he afterwards engraved.

THE OSPREY.

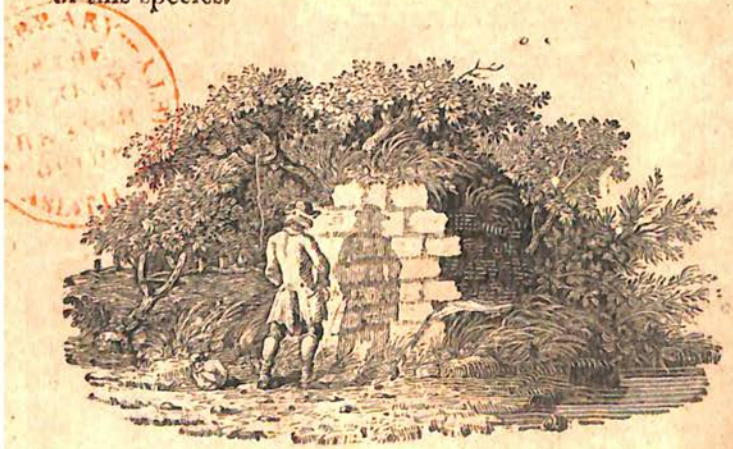
BALD BUZZARD, SEA EAGLE, OR FISHING HAWK.

(*Falco Haliætus*, Lin.—*Le Balbuzzard*, Buff.)

THE length of this bird is two feet; its breadth, from tip to tip, above five: its bill is black, with a blue cere, and its eye yellow: the crown of its head is white, marked with oblong dusky spots; its cheeks, and all the under parts of its body are white, slightly spotted with brown on its breast; from the corner of each eye a streak of brown extends down the sides of the neck towards the wing; the upper part of the body is brown; the two

middle feathers of the tail are the same; the others are marked on the inner webs with alternate bars of brown and white: the legs are very short and thick, being only two inches and a quarter long, and two inches in circumference; they are of a pale blue colour; the claws black; the outer toe is larger than the inner one, and turns easily backward, by which means this bird can more readily secure its slippery prey.

Buffon observes that the Osprey is the most numerous of the large birds of prey, and is scattered over the extent of Europe, from Sweden to Greece, and that it is found even in Egypt and Nigritia. Its haunts are on the sea shore, and on the borders of rivers and lakes: its principal food is fish; it darts upon its prey with great rapidity, and with undeviating aim. The Italians compare its descent upon the water to a piece of lead falling upon that element, and distinguish it by the name of *Aquila Piumbina*, or the Leaden Eagle. It builds its nest on the ground, among reeds, and lays three or four eggs, of an elliptical form, rather less than those of a Hen. The Carolina and Cayenne Ospreys are varieties of this species.



THE COMMON BUZZARD,

OR PUTTOCK.

(*Falco Buteo*, Lin.—*La Buse*, Buff.)

M. Buffon distinguishes the Kites and the Buzzards from the Eagles and Hawks by their habits and dispositions, which he compares to those of the Vultures, and places them after those birds. Though possessed of strength, agility, and weapons to defend themselves, they are cowardly, inactive, and slothful; they will fly before a Sparrow-hawk, and when overtaken, will suffer themselves to be beaten, and even brought to the ground, without resistance.

The Buzzard is about twenty inches in length, and in

breadth four feet and a half. Its bill is of a lead colour; eyes pale yellow: the upper parts of the body are of a dusky brown colour; the wings and tail are marked with bars of a darker hue; the under parts pale, variegated with a light reddish brown: the legs are yellow; claws black. But birds of this species are subject to greater variations than most other birds, as scarcely two are alike: some are entirely white; of others the head only is white; and others again are mottled with brown and white.

This well-known bird is of a sedentary and indolent disposition; it continues for many hours perched upon a tree or eminence, whence it darts upon the game that comes within its reach: it feeds on birds, small quadrupeds, reptiles, and insects. Its nest is constructed with small branches, lined in the inside with wool and other soft materials; it lays two or three eggs, of a whitish colour, spotted with yellow. It feeds and tends its young with great assiduity. Ray affirms, that if the female be killed during the time of incubation, the male Buzzard takes the charge of them, and patiently rears the young till they are able to provide for themselves.

The editors were favoured with one of these birds by John Trevelyan, Esq. of Wallington, in the county of Northumberland, by whom it was shot in the act of devouring its prey—a Partridge it had just killed. It had entirely separated the flesh from the bones, which, with the legs and wings, were afterwards discovered lying at a small distance from the place where the Buzzard was shot.

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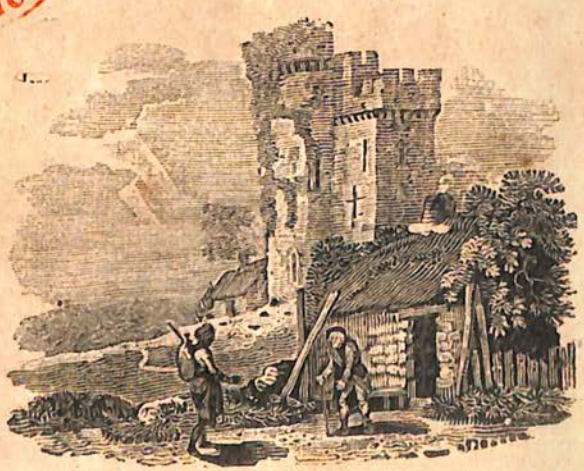
THE HONEY BUZZARD

(*Falco Apivorus*, Lin.—*La Bondrée*, Buff.)

Is as large as the Buzzard, measuring twenty-two inches in length; the wings extend above four feet. Its bill is black, and rather longer than that of the Buzzard; the eyes are yellow; the head large and flat, and of an ash colour; upper parts of the body dark brown; the under parts white, spotted or barred with rusty brown on the breast and belly; tail brown, marked with three broad dusky bars, between each of which are two or three of the same colour, but narrower: the legs are stout and short, of a dull yellow colour; claws black.

This bird builds a nest similar to that of the Buzzard, and of the same kind of materials; its eggs are of an ash colour, with small brown spots: it sometimes takes possession of the nests of other birds, and feeds its young with wasps and other insects; it is fond of field mice, frogs, lizards, and insects. It does not soar like the Kite, but flies low from tree to tree, or from bush to bush. It is found in all the northern parts of Europe, and in the open parts of Russia and Siberia, but is not so common in England as the Buzzard.

Buffon observes, that it is frequently caught in the winter, when it is fat and delicious eating.



MOOR BUZZARD.

DUCK HAWK, OR WHITE-HEADED HARPY.

(*Falco Æruginosus*, Lin.—*Le Busard*, Buff.)

LENGTH above twenty-one inches. The bill is black; cere and eyes yellow; the whole crown of the head is of a yellowish white, lightly tinged with brown; the throat is of a light rust colour: the rest of the plumage is of a reddish brown, with pale edges; the greater wing coverts tipped with white: the legs are yellow; claws black.

Birds of this kind vary much: in some, the crown and back part of the head are yellow; and in one described by Mr Latham, the whole bird was uniformly of a chocolate brown, with a tinge of rust colour. The above figure and description were taken from a very fine living bird, sent for the use of this work by the late John Silvertop, Esq. of Minster-Acres, in the county of Northumberland, which very nearly agreed with that figured in the *Planches Enlumineés*.

The Moor Buzzard preys on rabbits, young Wild Ducks, and other water fowl; and likewise feeds on fish, frogs, reptiles, and even insects: its haunts are in hedges and bushes near pools, marshes, and rivers that abound with fish. It builds its nest a little above the surface of the ground, or in hillocks covered with thick herbage: the female lays three or four eggs of a whitish colour, irregularly sprinkled with dusky spots. Though smaller, it is more active and bolder than the Common Buzzard, and, when pursued, it faces its antagonist, and makes a vigorous defence.

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THE KITE.

FORK-TAILED KYTE, OR GLEAD.

(*Falco Milvus*, Lin.—*Le Milan Royal*, Buff.)

THIS bird is easily distinguished from the Buzzard by its forked tail, which is its peculiar and distinguishing feature. Its length is about two feet: its bill is of a horn colour, furnished with bristles at the base; its eyes and cere are yellow; the feathers on the head and neck are long and narrow, of a hoary colour, streaked with brown down the middle of each; those on the body are of a reddish brown colour; the margin of each feather pale; the quills are dark brown, the legs yellow, and the claws black. It is common in England, where it continues the whole year. It is found in various parts of

Europe, in very northern latitudes, whence it retires towards Egypt before winter, in great numbers: it is said to breed there, and return in April to Europe, where it breeds a second time, contrary to the nature of rapacious birds in general. The female lays two or three eggs of a whitish colour, spotted with pale yellow, and of a roundish form. Though the Kite weighs somewhat less than three pounds, the extent of its wings is more than five feet; its flight is rapid, and it soars very high in the air, frequently beyond the reach of our sight; yet at this distance it perceives its food distinctly, and descends upon its prey with irresistible force: its attacks are confined to small animals and birds; it is particularly fond of young chickens, but the fury of their mother is generally sufficient to drive away the robber.

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THE GOSHAWK.

(Falco Palumbarius Lin.—*L'Autour,* Buff.)

THIS bird is somewhat longer than the Buzzard, but slenderer and more beautiful; its length is one foot ten inches: its bill is blue, tipped with black; cere green; eyes yellow; over each eye there is a whitish line: the head and all the upper parts of the body are of a deep brown colour; each side of the neck is irregularly marked with white: the breast and belly are white, with a number of wavy lines or bars of black; the tail is long, of an ash colour, and crossed with four or five dusky bars; the legs are yellow, and the claws black; the wings are much shorter than the tail. M. de Buffon, who brought up two young birds of this kind, a male and

female, makes the following observation: "That the Goshawk, before has shed its feathers, that is in its first year, is marked on the breast and belly with longitudinal brown spots; but after it has had two moultings they disappear, and their place is occupied by transverse bars, which continue during the rest of its life." He observes further, "that though the male was much smaller than the female, it was fiercer and more vicious. The Goshawk feeds on mice and small birds, and eagerly devours raw flesh; it plucks the birds very neatly, and tears them into pieces before it eats them, but swallows the pieces entire; and frequently disgorges the hair rolled up in small pellets."

The Goshawk is found in France and Germany; it is not very common in this country, but is more frequent in Scotland; it is likewise common in North America, Russia, and Siberia: in Chinese Tartary there is a variety which is mottled with brown and yellow. They are said to be used by the Emperor of China in his sporting excursions, when he is usually attended by his grand falconer, and a thousand of inferior rank. Every bird has a silver plate fastened to its foot, with the name of the falconer who has the charge of it, that, in case it should be lost, it may be restored to the proper person; but if he should not be found, the bird is delivered to another officer called the *guardian of lost birds*, who, to make his situation known, erects his standard in a conspicuous place among the army of hunters. In former times the custom of carrying a Hawk on the hand was confined to men of high distinction; so that it was a saying among the Welsh, "you may know a gentleman by his Hawk, horse, and greyhound." Even the ladies

in those times were partakers of this gallant sport, and have been represented in sculpture with Hawks on their hands. At present this noble diversion is wholly laid aside in this country; the advanced state of agriculture which every where prevails, and the consequent improvement and inclosure of lands, would but ill accord with the pursuits of the falconer, who requires a large and extensive range of country, where he may pursue his game without molestation to himself, or injury to his neighbour. The expence that attended this sport was very considerable, which confined it to princes and men of the highest rank. In the time of James I. Sir Thomas Monson is said to have given a thousand pounds for a cast of Hawks. In the reign of Edward III. it was made felony to steal a Hawk; to take its eggs, even in a person's own ground, was punishable with imprisonment for a year and a day, together with a fine at the king's pleasure. Such was the delight our ancestors took in this royal sport, and such were the means by which they endeavoured to secure it. Besides the bird just described, there are many other kinds which were formerly in high estimation for the sports of the field; these were principally the Jer-Falcon, the Falcon, the Lanner, the Sacre,* the Hobby, the Kestrel, and the Merlin: these are called the Long-winged Hawks, and are distinguished from the Goshawk, the Sparrow-hawk, the Kite, and the Buzzard, which are of shorter wing, slower in their motions, more indolent, and less courageous than the others.

* A name implying a particular brown colour of some of the unmoulted Falcons-Gentil.

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THE SPARROWHAWK.

(*Falco Nisus*, Lin.—*L'Epervier*, Buff.)

THE length of the male is twelve inches; that of the female fifteen. Its bill is blue, furnished with bristles at the base, which overhang the nostrils; the colour of the eye is bright orange; the head is flat at the top, and above each eye is a strong bony projection, which seems as if intended to secure it from external injury: from this projection a few scattered spots of white form a faint line running backward towards the neck: the top of the head and all the upper parts of the body are of a dusky brown colour; on the back part of the head there is a faint line of white; the scapulars are marked with two spots of white on each feather; the greater quill feathers and the tail are dusky, with four bars of a darker hue on each; the inner edges of all the quills are marked with two or more large white spots; the tips of the tail

feathers are white; the breast, belly, and under coverts of the wings and thighs are white, beautifully barred with brown; the throat is faintly streaked with brown: the legs and feet are yellow; claws black.

The above is the description of a female; the male differs both in size and colour: the upper part of his body is of a dark lead colour, and the bars on his breast are more numerous.

The female builds her nest in hollow trees, high rocks, or lofty ruins, sometimes in the old nest of a crow, and generally lays four or five eggs, spotted with reddish spots at the longer end.

The Sparrowhawk is very numerous in various parts of the world, from Russia to the Cape of Good Hope. It is a bold and spirited bird; but is obedient and docile, and can be easily trained to hunt Partridges and Quails; it makes great destruction among Pigeons, young poultry, and small birds of all kinds, which it will attack and carry off in the most daring manner.

THE JER-FALCON.

(*Falco Gyrfalco*, Lin.—*Le Gerfaut*, Buff.)

This is a very elegant species, and is larger than the Goshawk. Its bill is much hooked, and yellow; the iris is dusky; the throat white, as is likewise the general colour of the plumage, but spotted with brown; the breast and belly are marked with lines, pointing downwards; the spots on the back and wings are larger; the feathers on the thighs are very long, and of a pure white; those of the tail are barred: the legs are of a pale blue, and feathered below the knee. This bird is a native of the cold and dreary climates of the north, and is

found in Russia, Norway, and Iceland: it is never seen in warm, and seldom in temperate climates; it is found, but rarely, in Scotland and the Orkneys. Buffon mentions three varieties of the Jer-Falcon; the first is brown on all the upper parts of the body; and white, spotted with brown, on the under. This is found in Iceland: the second is very similar to it; and the third is entirely white. Next to the Eagle, it is the most formidable, the most active, and the most intrepid of all voracious birds, and is the dearest and most esteemed for falconry. It is transported from Iceland and Russia into France, Italy, and even into Persia and Turkey; nor does the heat of these climates appear to diminish its strength, or blunt its vivacity. It boldly attacks the largest of the feathered race; the Stork, the Heron, and the Crane are easy victims: it kills hares by darting directly upon them. The female, as in all other birds of prey, is much larger and stronger than the male, which is used in falconry only to catch the Kite, the Heron, and the Crow.

THE GENTIL-FALCON.

(Falco Gentilis, Lin.)

This bird is somewhat larger than the Goshawk. Its bill is of a lead colour; cere and irides yellow: the head and back part of the neck are rusty, streaked with black; the back and wings are brown; scapulars tipped with rusty; the quills dusky, the outer webs barred with black; the lower part of the inner webs marked with white; the tail is long, and marked with alternate bars of black and ash colour, and tipped with white; the legs are yellow, and the claws black: the wings extend exactly to the tip of the tail.

ROYAL ASIATIC

PEREGRINE FALCON.

PASSENGER FALCON.

(Falco Peregrinus, Lin.)

THIS scarce bird has greatly the look of the Hobby Hawk, but is much larger. The bill is pale blue, tipped with black; it is short, strong, and much notched. The irides are dark; orbits and cere yellow: the head, hinder part of the neck, and cheeks, are brownish black, with a stripe of that colour falling down from the cheeks and corners of the mouth, before the auriculars, on each side of the throat. The upper plumage is dingy bluish ash, more or less clouded and barred with dark brown, and the shaft of each feather black. The bastard wing, and the primary and secondary quills appear at a first glance to be of an uniform plain dark ash coloured brown, but on

a nearer inspection, the whole are seen to be barred with darker spots, and tipped with dull white. The rump and tail coverts are more distinctly barred, and of a lighter colour than the other upper parts. The tail, which consists of twelve feathers, is of a dark dingy ash, barred or spotted with brownish black, and tipped with pale brown or dirty white. The under parts of the plumage are of a pale clay colour, plain on the auriculars, the chin, and the fore part of the neck; but towards the breast, the feathers are slightly marked with very small scratches of black, and the breast and belly with roundish black spots. The sides and insides of the wings are dull white, beautifully and distinctly barred with dark brown; the primary and secondary quills, on the inside, are also barred, in the same way, with ash colour and dingy freckled white. The thighs are long, and prettily marked with small heart-shaped spots; the legs and toes short, strong and yellow; claws black.

The bird from which this figure and description were taken, was shot by M. Bell, Esq. of Woolsington, in the act of tearing a Partridge, March 21, 1814. Its length from bill to tail is sixteen inches; breadth from tip to tip of the wings thirty-seven inches; weight twenty-three ounces and a half.

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THE HEN-HARRIER.

DOVE-COLOURED FALCON, OR BLUE HAWK.

(Falco Cyaneus, Lin.—*L'Oiseau St Martin*, Buff.)

The length seventeen inches; breadth, from tip to tip, somewhat more than three feet. The bill is black, and covered at the base with long bristly feathers; the cere, irides, and edges of the eyelids are yellow: the upper parts of the body are of a bluish grey colour, mixed with light tinges of rusty; the breast and under coverts of the wings are white, the former marked with rusty-coloured streaks, the latter with bars of the same colour; the greater quills are black, the secondaries and lesser quills ash coloured; on the latter, in some birds, a spot of black in the middle of each feather forms a bar across the wing; the two middle feathers of the tail are grey, the next three are marked on their inner webs with dusky bars, the two outermost are marked with alternate bars

of white and rust colour: the legs are long and slender, and of a yellow colour. These birds vary much: of several with which this work has been favoured by John Silvertop, Esq. some were perfectly white on the under parts, and of a larger size than common, probably the difference arises from the age of the bird.*

The Hen-harrier feeds on birds, lizards, and other reptiles; it breeds annually on Cheviot, and on the shady precipices under the Roman wall by Craglake:† it flies low, skimming along the surface of the ground in search of its prey. The female makes her nest on the ground, and lays four eggs of a reddish colour, with a few white spots.

* It has been supposed that this and the following are male and female; but the repeated instances of Hen-harriers of both sexes having been seen, leave it beyond all doubt that they constitute two distinct species.

† Wallis's Natural History of Northumberland.

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THE RINGTAIL.

(Falco Pygargus, Lin.—*Soubuse*, Buff.)

Its length is twenty inches; breadth three feet nine. Its bill is black; cere and irides yellow: the upper part of the body is dusky; the breast, belly, and thighs are of a yellowish brown, marked with oblong dusky spots; the rump white; from the back part of the head, behind the eyes to the throat, there is a line of whitish coloured feathers, forming a collar or wreath; under each eye there is a white spot; the tail is long, and marked with alternate brown and dusky bars: the legs are yellow; claws black.

THE LANNER.

(Falco Lanarius, Lin.—*Le Lanier*, Buff.)

This bird is somewhat less than the Buzzard. Its bill is blue; cere inclining to green; eyes yellow; the

feathers on the upper parts of the body are brown, with pale edges; above each eye there is a white line, which runs towards the hinder part of the head, and beneath it is a black streak pointing downwards towards the neck; the throat is white; the breast of a dull yellow, marked with brown spots; thighs and vent the same; the quill feathers are dusky, marked on the inner webs with oval spots, of a rust colour; the tail is spotted in the same manner: the legs are short and strong, and of a bluish colour.

The Lanner is not common in England; it breeds in Ireland, and is found in various parts of Europe. It derives its name from its mode of tearing its prey into small pieces with its bill.

THE KESTREL.

STONEGALL, STANNEL HAWK, OR WINDHOVER.

(*Falco Tinnunculus*, Lin.—*La Cresserelle*, Buff.)

The male of this species differs so much from the female, that we have given a figure of it from one we had

in our possession, probably an old one. Its length is fourteen inches; breadth two feet three inches: its bill is blue; cere and eyelids yellow; eyes black; the forehead dull yellow; the top of the head, back part of the neck, and sides, as far as the points of the wings, are of a lead colour, faintly streaked with black; the cheeks are paler; from the corner of the mouth on each side there is a dark streak pointing downwards; the back and coverts of the wings are of a bright vinous colour, spotted with black; quill feathers dusky, with light edges; all the under part of the body is of a pale rust colour, streaked and spotted with black; thighs plain; the tail feathers are of a fine blue grey, with black shafts; towards the end there is a broad black bar both on the upper part and under sides; the tips are white: the legs are yellow, and the claws black.

The Kestrel is widely diffused throughout Europe, and is found in the more temperate parts of North America: it is a handsome bird; its sight is acute, and its flight easy and graceful: it breeds in the hollows of trees, and in the holes of rocks, towers, and ruined buildings; it lays four or five eggs, of a pale reddish colour: its food consists of small birds, field mice, and reptiles: after it has secured its prey, it plucks the feathers very dexterously from the birds, but swallows the mice entire, and discharges the hair, in the form of round balls, from its bill. This bird is frequently seen hovering in the air, and fanning with its wings by a gentle motion, or wheeling slowly round, at the same time watching for its prey, on which it shoots like an arrow. It was formerly used in Great Britain for catching small birds and young Partridges.

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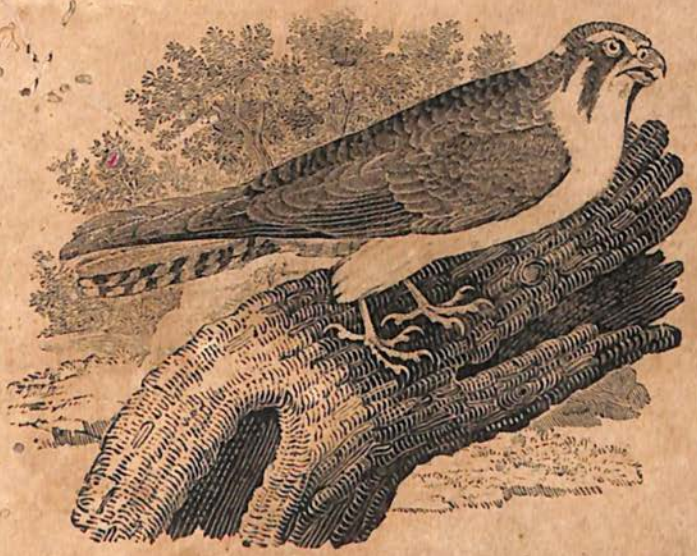
THE FEMALE KESTREL.

This beautiful bird is distinguished from every other Hawk by its variegated plumage: its bill is blue; cere and feet yellow; eyes dark coloured, surrounded with a yellow skin; its head is rust coloured, streaked with black; behind each eye there is a light spot; the back and wing coverts are rusty brown, and elegantly marked with numerous undulated bars of black; the breast, belly, and thighs are of a pale reddish buff colour, with dusky streaks pointing downwards; vent plain; the tail is marked by a pretty broad dark ash coloured bar near the end; a number of smaller ones, of the same colour, occupy the remaining part; the tip is pale.



THE HOBBY.

(Falco Subbuteo, Lin.—*Le Hobreau*, Buff.)

THE length of the male is twelve inches; breadth about two feet. The bill is blue; cere and orbits of the eyes yellow; the irides orange; over each eye there is a light coloured streak; the top of the head, and back, are of a bluish black; the wing coverts the same, but in some edged with rust colour; the hinder part of the neck is marked with two pale yellow spots; a black mark from behind each eye, forming almost a crescent, is extended downwards on the neck; the breast and belly are pale, marked with dusky streaks; the thighs rusty, with long dusky streaks; the wings brown; the two middle feathers of the tail are of a deep dove colour, the others are barred with rusty, and tipped with white. The female is much larger, and the spots on her breast

more conspicuous than those of the male: the legs and feet are yellow.

The Hobby breeds with us, but is said to emigrate in October. It was formerly used in falconry, chiefly for Larks and other small birds, which were caught in a singular manner: when the Hawk was cast off, the Larks, fixed to the ground through fear, became an easy prey to the fowler, who drew a net over them. Buffon says, that it was used in taking Partridges and Quails.

THE MERLIN.

(Falco Æsalon, Lin.—*L'Emerillon*, Buff.)

The Merlin is the smallest of all the Hawk kind, scarcely exceeding the size of a Blackbird. Its bill is blue; cere and irides yellow: the head is of a rust colour, streaked with black; back and wings of a deepish

brown, tinged with ash, streaked down the shafts with black, and edged with rust colour: quill feathers dark, tipped and margined on the inner webs with reddish white; the breast and belly are of a yellowish white, with streaks of rusty brown pointing downwards; the tail is long, and marked with alternate dusky and pale bars; the wings, when closed, do not reach quite to the end of the tail: the legs are yellow; claws black.

The Merlin, though small, is not inferior in courage to any of the Falcon tribe. It was used for taking Larks, Partridges, and Quails, which it would frequently kill by one blow, striking them on the breast, head, or neck. Buffon observes that this bird differs from the Falcons, and all the rapacious kind, in the male and female's being of the same size. The Merlin does not breed here, but visits us in October; it flies low, and with great celerity and ease. It preys on small birds, and breeds in woods, laying five or six eggs.

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OF THE OWL.

THE Owl is distinguished, among birds of the rapacious kind, by peculiar and striking characters: its outward appearance is not more singular than its habits and dispositions: unable to bear the brighter light of the sun, the Owl retires to some lonely retreat, where it passes the day in silence and obscurity; but at the approach of evening, when all nature is desirous of repose, and the smaller animals, which are its principal food, are seeking their nestling places, the Owl comes forth from its lurking holes in quest of its prey. Its eyes are admirably adapted for this purpose, being so formed as to distinguish objects with greater facility in the dusk than in broad day-light. Its flight is low and silent during its nocturnal excursions, and when it rests it is then only known by its frightful and reiterated cries, with which it interrupts the silence of the night. During the day, the Owl is seldom seen; but, if forced from his retreat, his flight is broken and interrupted, and he is sometimes attended by numbers of small birds of various kinds, who seeing his embarrassment, pursue him with incessant cries, and torment him with their movements: the Jay, the Thrush, the Blackbird, the Redbreast, and the Titmouse, all assemble to hurry and perplex him. During all this, the Owl remains perched upon the branch of a tree, and answers them only with aukward and insignificant gestures, turning his head, eyes,* and body, with all the appearance of mockery and affectation. All the

* At whatever they look, they turn their heads round towards the object; for it appears that the eyes of all this tribe are fixed in their socket, and do not move.

species of Owls, however, are not alike dazzled and confused with the light of the sun; some of them being able to fly, and see distinctly in open day.

Nocturnal birds of prey are generally divided into two kinds—that which hath horns or ears, and that which is earless or without horns. These horns consist of small tufts of feathers, standing up like ears on each side of the head, which are erected or depressed at the pleasure of the animal; and in all probability are of use in directing the organs of hearing, which are very large, to their proper object. Both kinds agree in having their eyes so formed as to be able to pursue their prey with much less light than other birds. The general character of the Owl is as follows:—The eyes are large, and are surrounded with a radiated circle of feathers, of which the eye itself is the centre; the beak and talons are strong and crooked; the body very short, but thick, and well covered with a coat of the softest and most delicate plumage; the external edges of the outer quill feathers in general are finely fringed, which adds greatly to the smoothness and silence of its flight.

THE GREAT EARED OWL.

(*Strix Bubo*, Lin.—*Le grand Duc*, Buff.)

This bird is not much inferior in size to an Eagle. Its head is very large, and is adorned with two tufts, more than two inches long, which stand just above each eye; its bill is strong, and much hooked; the eyes large, and of a bright yellow; the whole plumage is of a rusty brown, finely variegated with black and yellow lines, spots, and specks; its belly is ribbed with bars of

a brown colour, confusedly intermixed; its tail is shor , marked with dusky bars; its legs are strong, and covered to the claws with a thick close down, of a rust colour; its claws are large, much hooked, and of a dusky colour. Its nest is large, being nearly three feet in diameter; it is composed of sticks bound together by fibrous roots, and lined with leaves. It generally lays two eggs, somewhat larger than those of a Hen, and variegated like the bird itself. The young ones are very voracious, and are well supplied with various kinds of food by the parents. This bird has been found, though rarely, in Great Britain; it builds its nest in the caverns of rocks, in mountainous, and almost inaccessible places, and is seldom seen on the plain, or perched on trees: it feeds on young hares, rabbits, rats, mice, and reptiles of various kinds.

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THE LONG-EARED OWL.

HORN OWL.

(*Strix Otus*, Lin.—*Le Hibou*, Buff.)

Its length is fourteen inches; breadth somewhat more than three feet. Its bill is black; irides of a bright yellow; the radiated circle round each eye is of a light cream colour, in some parts tinged with red; between the bill and the eye there is a circular streak, of a dark brown colour; another circle of a dark rusty brown entirely surrounds the face; its horns or ears consist of six feathers, closely laid together, of a dark brown colour, tipped and edged with yellow; the upper part of the body is beautifully penciled with fine streaks of white, rusty, and brown; the breast and neck are yellow, finely

marked with dusky streaks, pointing downwards; the belly, thighs, and vent feathers are of a light cream colour: upon each wing there are four or five large white spots; the quill and tail feathers are marked with dusky and reddish bars: the legs are feathered down to the claws, which are very sharp; the outer claw is moveable, and may be turned backwards.

This bird is common in various parts of Europe, as well as in this country; its usual haunts are in old ruined buildings, in rocks, and in hollow trees. M. Buffon observes, that it seldom constructs a nest of its own, but not unfrequently occupies that of the Magpie: it lays four or five eggs; the young are at first white, but acquire their natural colour in about fifteen days.

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THE SHORT-EARED OWL.

(*Strix Brachyotos*, Phil. Trans. vol. 62, p. 384.)

Length fourteen inches; breadth three feet. The head is small, and Hawk-like; bill dusky; the irides are of a bright yellow, and when the pupil is contracted, shine like gold: the circle round each eye is of a dirty white, with dark streaks pointing outwards; immediately round the eye there is a circle of black; the two horns or ears consist of not more than three feathers, of a pale brown or tawny colour, with a dark streak in the middle of each; the whole upper part of the body is variously marked with dark brown and tawny, the feathers are mostly edged with the latter; the breast and belly are of a pale yellow, marked with dark longitudinal streaks

which are most numerous on the breast: the legs and feet are covered with feathers of a pale yellow colour; the claws are much hooked, and black: the wings are long, and extend beyond the tail; the quills are marked with alternate bars of a dusky and a pale brown; the tail is likewise marked with bars of the same colours, and the middle feathers are distinguished by a dark spot in the centre of the yellow space; the tip is white. Of several of these birds, both male and female, with which this work has been favoured, both sexes had the upright tufts or ears: in one which was alive, they were very conspicuous, and appeared more erect while the bird remained undisturbed; but when frightened, were scarcely to be seen: in the dead birds they were hardly discernible.

Mr Pennant seems to be the first describer of this rare and beautiful species, which he supposes to be a bird of passage, as it only visits us in the latter part of the year, and disappears in the spring. It flies by day, and sometimes is seen in companies: twenty-eight were once counted in a turnip-field in November.* It is found chiefly in wooded or mountainous countries: its food is principally field mice.

* Communicated by Thomas Penrice, Esq. of Yarmouth.

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THE FEMALE HORNED OWL.

This bird was somewhat larger than the former; the colours and marks were the same, but much darker, and the spots on the breast larger and more numerous; the ears were not discernible. Being a dead bird, and having not seen any other at the time, the editors supposed it to be a distinct kind; but having since seen several, both males and females, they are convinced of the mistake.

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THE WHITE OWL.

BARN OWL, CHURCH OWL, GILLIHOWLET, OR SCREECH OWL.

(*Strix Flammea*, Lin.—*L'Effraie, ou la Fresaie*, Buff.)

Length fourteen inches. Bill pale horn colour; eyes dark; the radiated circle round the eye is composed of feathers of the most delicate softness, and perfectly white; the head, back, and wings, are of a pale chesnut, beautifully powdered with very fine grey and brown spots, intermixed with white; the breast, belly, and thighs are white; on the former are a few dark spots: the legs are feathered down to the toes, which are covered with short hairs; the wings extend beyond the tail, which is short,

and marked with alternate bars of dusky and white; the claws are white. Birds of this kind vary considerably: of several which were in the hands of the editors, the differences were very conspicuous, the colours being more or less faint according to the age of the bird; the breast in some was white, without spots—in others pale yellow.

The White Owl is well known, and is often seen in the most populous towns, frequenting churches, old houses, maltings, and other uninhabited buildings, where it continues during the day, and leaves its haunts in the twilight in quest of its prey. It has obtained the name of Screech Owl from its cries, repeated at intervals, and rendered loud and frightful from the stillness of the night. During its repose it makes a blowing noise, resembling the snoring of a man. It makes no nest, but deposits its eggs in the holes of walls, and lays five or six, of a whitish colour. It feeds on mice and small birds, which it swallows whole, and afterwards emits the bones, feathers, and other indigestible parts, at its mouth, in the form of small round cakes, which are often found in the empty buildings it frequents.

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BOMBAY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

THE TAWNY OWL.

COMMON BROWN IVY OWL, OR HOWLET.

(*Strix Stridula*, Lin.—*Le Chathuant*, Buff.)

This bird is about the size of the last. Its bill is white: eyes dark blue: the radiated feathers round the eyes are white, finely streaked with brown; the head, neck, back, wing coverts, and scapulars, are of a tawny brown colour, finely powdered and spotted with dark brown and black; on the wing coverts and scapulars, are several large white spots, regularly placed, so as to form three rows; the quill feathers are marked with alternate bars of light and dark brown; the breast and belly are of a pale yellow, marked with narrow dark streaks pointing downwards, and crossed with others of

the same colour: the legs are feathered down to the toes; the claws are large, much hooked, and white. This species is found in various parts of Europe; it frequents woods, and builds its nest in the hollows of trees.

THE LITTLE OWL.

(*Strix Passerina*, Lin.—*La Chevêche ou petite Chouette*, Buff.)

THIS is the smallest of the Owl kind, not being larger than a Blackbird. Its bill is brown at the base, and of a yellow colour at the tip; eyes pale yellow; the circular feathers on the face are white, tipped with black; the upper part of the body is of an olive brown colour; the top of the head and wing coverts are spotted with white; the breast and belly white, spotted with brown; the feathers of the tail are barred with rust colour and brown, and tipped with white; the legs are covered with down of a rusty colour mixed with white; the toes and claws are of a brownish colour. It frequents rocks, caverns, and ruined buildings, and builds its nest, which is constructed in the rudest manner, in the most retired places: it lays five eggs, spotted with white and yellow. It sees better in the day-time than other nocturnal birds, and gives chace to small birds on the wing; it likewise feeds on mice, which it tears in pieces with its bill and claws, and swallows them by morsels: it is said to pluck the birds which it kills before it eats them, in which it differs from all the other Owls. It is rarely met with in England: it is sometimes found in Yorkshire, Flintshire, and in the neighbourhood of London.

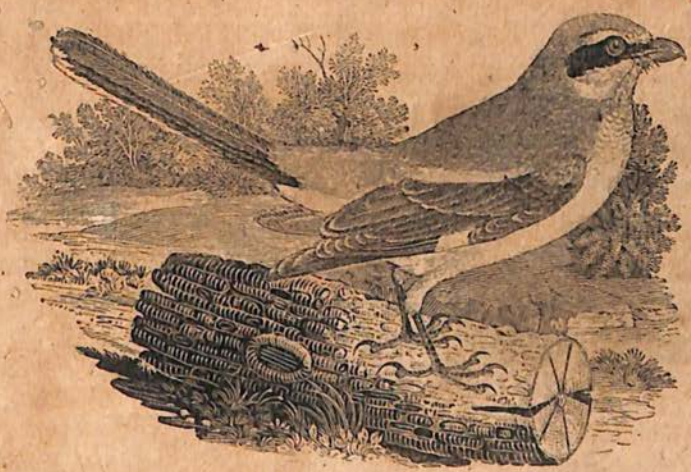
OF THE SHRIKE.

THE last class to be mentioned of birds of the rapacious kind, is that of the Shrike, which, as M. Buffon observes, though they are small, and of a delicate form, yet their courage, their appetite for blood, and their hooked bill, entitle them to be ranked with the boldest and the most sanguinary of the rapacious tribe. This genus has been variously placed in the systems of naturalists; sometimes it has been classed with the Falcons, sometimes with the Pies, and has even been ranked with the harmless and inoffensive tribes of the Passerine kind, to which, indeed, in outward appearance at least, it bears no small resemblance. Conformably, however, with the latest arrangements, it is here placed in the rear of those birds which live by rapine and plunder; and, like most of the connecting links in the great chain of nature, it will be found to possess a middle quality, partaking of those which are placed on each side of it, and making thereby an easy transition from the one to the other.

The Shrike genus is distinguished by the following characteristics: the bill is strong, straight at the base, and hooked or bent towards the end; the upper mandible is notched near the tip, and the base is furnished with bristles; it has no cere; the tongue is divided at the end; the outer toe is connected to the middle one as far as the first joint. To these exterior marks may be added, that it possesses the most undaunted courage, and will attack birds much larger and stronger than itself, such as the Crow, the Magpie, and most of the smaller kinds of Hawks: if any of these should fly near the place of its retreat, the Shrike darts upon it with

loud cries, attacks the invader, and drives it from its nest. The parent birds will sometimes join on such occasions; and there are few birds that will venture to abide the contest. Shrikes will chase all the small birds upon the wing, and sometimes will venture to attack Partridges, and even young hares. Thrushes, Blackbirds, and such like, are their common prey; they fix on them with their talons, split the skull with their bill, and feed on them at leisure.

There are three kinds found in this kingdom, of which the following is the largest.



GREAT ASH-COLOURED SHRIKE.

MURDERING PIE, OR GREAT BUTCHER BIRD.

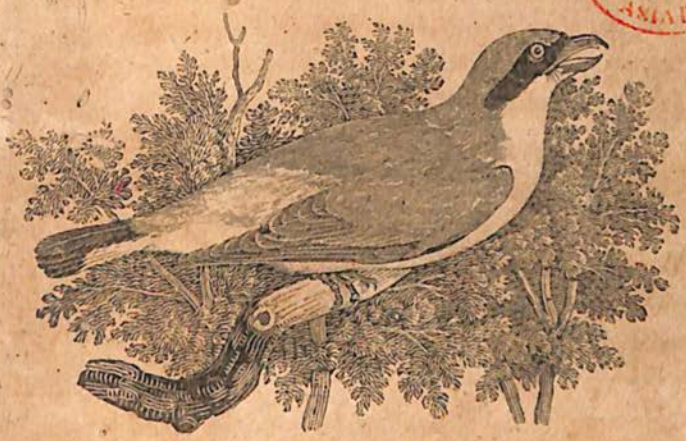
(*Lanius excubitor*, Lin.—*La Pie-Griesche grise*, Buff.)

The length about ten inches. Its bill is black, and furnished with bristles at the base: the upper parts of its plumage are of a pale blue ash colour; the under parts white; a black stripe passes through each eye; the

greater quills are black, with a large white spot at the base, forming a bar of that colour across the wing; the lesser quills are white at the top; the scapulars are white; the two middle feathers of the tail are black; the next on each side are white at the ends, gradually increasing to the outermost, which are nearly all white; the whole, when the tail is spread, forms a large oval spot of black; the legs are black. The female differs little from the male; she lays six eggs, of a dull olive green, spotted at the end with black.

This bird is rarely found in the cultivated parts of the country, preferring mountainous wilds, among furze and thorny thickets, for its residence. M. Buffon says it is common in France, where it continues all the year: it is met with likewise in Russia, and various parts of Europe; it preys on small birds, which it seizes by the throat, and, after strangling, fixes them on a sharp thorn, and tears them in pieces with its bill. Mr Pennant observes, that when kept in the cage, it sticks its food against the wires before it will eat it. It is said to imitate the notes of the smaller singing birds, thereby drawing them near its haunts, in order more securely to seize them.

The foregoing figure and description were taken from a very fine specimen, for which this work is indebted to the late Lieutenant H. F. Gibson, of the 4th dragoons.



THE RED-BACKED SHRIKE.

LESSER BUTCHER BIRD, OR FLUSHER.

(*Lanius Collurio*, Lin.—*L'Ecorcheur*, Buff.)

This bird is somewhat less than the last, being little more than seven inches long. Its bill is black; irides hazel; the head and lower part of the back are of a light grey colour; the upper part of the back and coverts of the wings are of a bright rusty red; the breast, belly, and sides of a fine pale rose or bloom colour; the throat is white; a stroke of black passes from the bill through each eye; the two middle feathers of the tail are black, the others are white at the base; the quills are of a brown colour; the legs black.

The female is somewhat larger than the male; the head is of a rust colour, mixed with grey; the breast, belly, and sides of a dirty white; the tail deep brown; the exterior web of the outer feathers white. It builds its nest in hedges or low bushes, and lays six white eggs, marked with a reddish brown circle towards the larger end.

The manners of this species are similar to those of the last: it frequently preys on young birds, which it takes in the nest; it likewise feeds on grasshoppers, beetles, and other insects. It also imitates the notes of other birds, in order the more surely to decoy them. When sitting on the nest, the female soon discovers herself at the approach of any person, by her loud and violent outcries.

THE WOODCHAT.

(La Pie-Griesche Rousse, Buff.)

Is said to equal the last in point of size; its bill is horn-coloured; feathers round the base whitish; head and part of the neck bright bay; from the base of the bill a black streak passes through each eye, inclining downwards on the neck; back dusky, under parts of a yellowish white; quills black, near the bottom of each a white spot; the two middle feathers of the tail are black, the outer edges and tips of the others are white; the legs black.

The description of this bird seems to have been taken from a drawing by Mr Edwards, in the Sloanian Museum, and is not unlike the Least Butcher Bird of that celebrated naturalist, which it resembles in size and in the distribution of its colours. M. Buffon supposes it may be a variety of the Red-backed Shrike, as they both depart in September, and return at the same time in the spring; the manners of both are said to be the same, and the difference of colours not very material: the female is somewhat different; the upper parts of the plumage being of a reddish colour, transversely streaked with brown; the under parts of a dirty white, marked in the same manner with brown; the tail is of a reddish brown, with a dusky mark near the end, tipped with red.

BIRDS OF THE PIE KIND

CONSTITUTE the next order in the arrangement of the feathered part of the creation: they consist of a numerous and irregular tribe, widely differing from each other in their habits, appetites, and manners, as well as in their form, size, and appearance. In general they are noisy, restless, and loquacious, and of all other kinds contribute the least towards supplying the necessities or the pleasures of man. At the head of these we shall place the Crow and its affinities, well known by its sooty plumage and croaking note, from every other tribe of the feathered race. Birds of this kind are found in every part of the known world, from Greenland to the Cape of Good Hope; and though generally disliked for their disgusting and indiscriminating voracity, yet in many respects they may be said to be of great benefit to mankind, not only by devouring putrid flesh, but principally by destroying great quantities of noxious insects, worms, and reptiles. Rooks, in particular, are fond of the erucæ of the hedge-chafer, or chesnut brown beetle,* for which they search with indefatigable pains. They are often accused of feeding on the corn just after it has

* These insects appear in hot weather, in formidable numbers, disrobing the fields and trees of their verdure, blossoms, and fruit, spreading desolation and destruction wherever they go. They appeared in great numbers in Ireland during a hot summer, and committed great ravages. In the year 1747, whole meadows and corn fields were destroyed by them in Suffolk. The decrease of rookeries in that county was thought to be the occasion of it. The many rookeries with us is in some measure the reason why we have so few of these destructive insects.

Wallis's History of Northumberland.

been sown, and various contrivances have been made both to kill and frighten them away; but, in our estimation, the advantages derived from the destruction which they make among grubs, earth-worms, and noxious insects of various kinds, greatly overpay the injury done to the future harvest, by the small quantity of corn they may destroy in searching after their favourite food. In general, they are sagacious, active, and faithful to each other: they live in pairs, and their mutual attachment is constant. They are a clamorous race, mostly build in trees, and form a kind of society, in which there appears something like a regular government: a centinel watches for the general safety, to give notice on the appearance of danger. On the approach of an enemy, or of a stranger, they act in concert, and drive him away with repeated attacks. On these occasions they are as bold as they are artful and cunning in avoiding the smallest appearance of real danger; of this the disappointed fowler has frequently occasion to take notice, on seeing the birds fly away before he can draw near enough to shoot them: from this circumstance it has been said that they discover their danger by the quickness of their scent, which enables them to provide for their safety in time; but of this we have our doubts, and rather ascribe it to the quickness of their sight, by which they discover the motions of the sportsman.

The general characters of this kind are well known, and are chiefly as follows:—The bill is strong, and has a slight curvature along the top of the upper mandible; the edges are thin, and sharp or cultrated; in many of the species there is a small notch near the tip; the nostrils are covered with bristles; tongue divided at the

end; three toes forward, one behind, the middle toe connected to the outer as far as the first joint.

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THE RAVEN

GREAT CORBIE CROW.

(*Corvus Corax*, Lin.—*Le Corbeau*, Buff.)

Is the largest of this kind; its length is above two feet; breadth four. Its bill is strong, and very thick at the base; it measures somewhat more than two inches and a half in length, and is covered with strong hairs or bristles, which extend above half its length, covering the nostrils: the general colour of the upper parts is a fine glossy black, reflecting a blue tint in particular lights; the under parts are duller, and of a dusky hue.

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The Raven is well known in all parts of the world, and in times of ignorance and superstition, was considered as ominous, foretelling future events by its horrid croakings, and announcing impending calamities: in those times the Raven was considered as a bird of vast importance, and the various changes and modulations of its voice were studied with the most careful attention, and were made use of by artful and designing men to mislead the ignorant and credulous. It is a very long-lived bird, and is supposed sometimes to live a century or more. It is fond of carrion, which it scents at a great distance; it is said that it will destroy rabbits, young ducks, and chickens; it has been known to seize on young lambs which have been dropped in a weak state, and pick out their eyes while yet alive: it will suck the eggs of other birds; it feeds also on earth-worms, reptiles, and even shell-fish when urged by hunger. It may be rendered very tame and familiar, and has been frequently taught to pronounce a variety of words: it is a crafty bird, and will frequently pick up things of value, such as rings, money, &c. and carry them to its hiding-place. It makes its nest early in the spring, and builds in trees and the holes of rocks, laying five or six eggs of a pale bluish green colour, spotted with brown. The female sits about twenty days, and is constantly attended by the male, who not only provides her with abundance of food, but relieves her in turn, and takes her place in the nest.

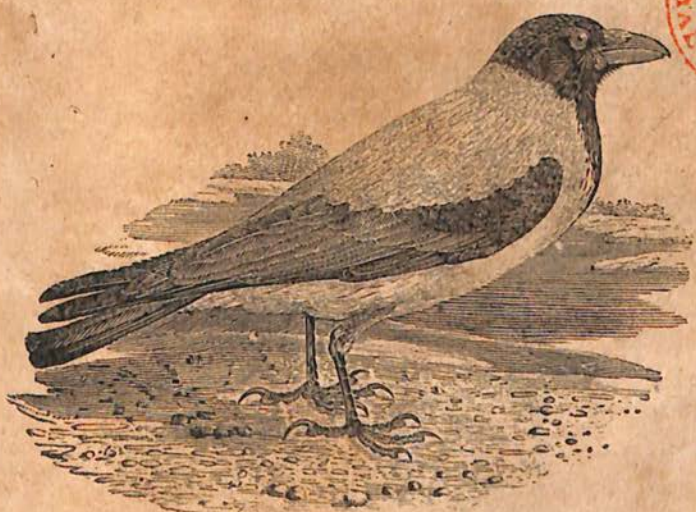
The natives of Greenland eat the flesh, and make a covering for themselves with the skins of these birds, which they wear next their bodies.

THE CARRION CROW

MIDDEN CROW, OR BLACK-NEBBED CROW.

(*Corvus Corone*, Lin.—*La Corneille*, Buff.)

Is less than the Raven, but similar to it in its habits, colour, and external appearance. It is about eighteen inches in length; its breadth about three feet. Birds of this kind are more numerous and as widely spread as the Raven; they live mostly in woods, and build their nests on trees; the female lays five or six eggs much like those of a Raven. They feed on putrid flesh of all sorts; likewise on eggs, worms, insects, and various sorts of grain. They live together in pairs, and remain in England during the whole year.



THE HOODED CROW

ROYSTON CROW.

(*Corvus Cornix*, Lin.—*Le Corneille Mantelée*, Buff.)

Is somewhat larger and more bulky than the Rook,

measuring twenty-two inches in length. Its bill is black, and two inches long; the head, fore part of the neck, wings, and tail are black; the back and all the under parts are of a pale ash colour; the legs black.

These birds arrive with the Woodcock, and on their first coming frequent the shores of rivers. They depart in the spring to breed in other countries, but it is said that they do not all leave us, as they have been seen during the summer months, in the northern quarters of our island, where they frequent the mountainous parts of the country, and breed in the pines. In more northern parts of the world they continue the whole year, and subsist on sea-worms, shell-fish, and other marine productions. With us they are seen to mix with, and to feed in the same manner as the Crow. During the breeding season they live in pairs, lay six eggs, and are said to be much attached to their offspring.

THE ROOK.

(*Corvus Frugilegus*, Lin.—*Le Freux*, Buff.)

This bird is about the size of the Carrion Crow, and, excepting its more glossy plumage, very much resembles it. The base of the bill and nostrils, as far as the eyes, is covered with a rough scabrous skin, in which it differs from all the rest, occasioned, it is said, by thrusting its bill into the earth in search of worms; but as the same appearance has been observed in such as have been brought up tame and unaccustomed to that mode of subsistence, we are inclined to consider it as an original peculiarity. We have already had occasion to observe that they are useful in preventing a too great increase of that destructive insect the chafer or dor-beetle, and thereby make large recompence for the depredations they may occasionally commit on the corn-fields. Rooks

are gregarious, and fly in immense flocks at morning and evening to and from their roosting places in quest of food. During the breeding time they live together in large societies, and build their nests on trees close to each other, frequently in the midst of large and populous towns. These rookeries, however, are often the scenes of bitter contests; the new-comers are frequently driven away by the old inhabitants, their half-built nests torn in pieces, and the unfortunate couple forced to begin their work anew in some more undisturbed situation: of this we had a remarkable instance in Newcastle. In the year 1783, a pair of Rooks, after an unsuccessful attempt to establish themselves in a rookery at no great distance from the Exchange, were compelled to abandon the attempt. They took refuge on the spire of that building, and although constantly interrupted by other Rooks, built their nest on the top of the vane, and brought forth their young, undisturbed by the noise of the populace below them; the nest and its inhabitants turning about with every change of the wind. They returned and built their nest every year on the same place till 1793, soon after which the spire was taken down.

THE JACK-DAW.

(*Corvus Monedula*, Lin.—*Le Choucas*, Buff.)

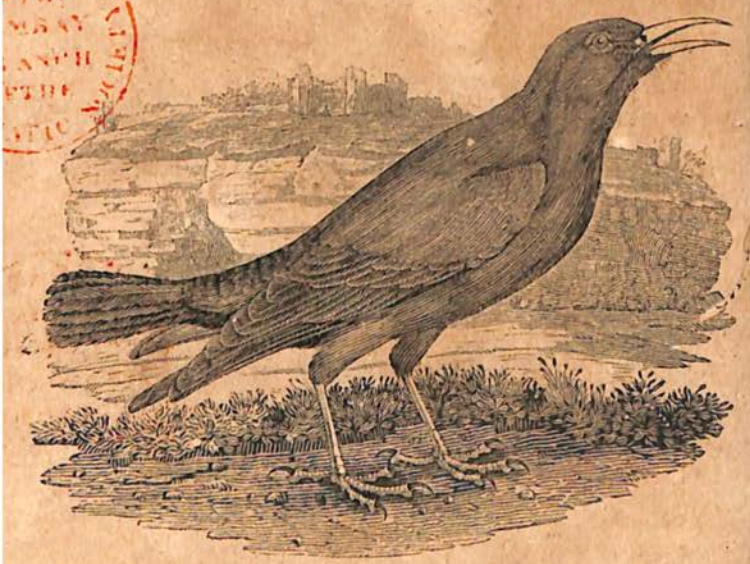
This bird is considerably less than the Rook, being only thirteen inches in length, and about twenty-eight in breadth. Its bill is black; eyes white; the hinder part of the head and neck are of a hoary grey colour; the rest of the plumage is of a fine glossy black above; beneath it has a dusky hue: the legs are black.

The Daw is very common in England, and remains with us the whole year: in other countries, as in France and various parts of Germany, it is migratory. They frequent churches, old towers, and ruins, in great flocks, where they build their nests: the female lays five or six eggs, paler than those of the Crow, and smaller; they rarely build in trees: in Hampshire they sometimes breed in the rabbit burrows.* They are easily tamed,

* White's Natural History of Selborne.

and may be taught to pronounce several words: they will conceal part of their food, and with it small pieces of money, or toys. They feed on insects, grain, fruit, and small pieces of flesh, and are said to be fond of Partridge's eggs.

There is a variety of the Daw found in Switzerland, having a white collar round its neck. In Norway and other cold countries they have been seen perfectly white.



THE RED-LEGGED CROW.

CORNISH CHOUGH.

(*Corvus Graculus*, Lin.—*Le Coracias*, Buff.)

This bird is about the size of the Jackdaw. The bill is long, curved, sharp at the tip, and of a bright red colour; the iris of the eye is composed of two circles, the outer one red, the inner light blue; the eye-lids are red;

the plumage is altogether of a purplish violet black: the legs are as red as the bill; the claws are large, hooked, and black.

Buffon describes the bird "as of an elegant figure, lively, restless, and turbulent, but it may be tamed to a certain degree." It builds on high cliffs by the sea side, and chiefly frequents the coasts of Devonshire and Cornwall, and likewise many parts of Wales; a few are found on the Dover cliffs, and some in Scotland. The female lays four or five white eggs, spotted with yellow. It is a voracious, bold, and greedy bird, and feeds on insects and berries: it is said to be particularly fond of the juniper berry. Its manners are like those of a Jackdaw: it is attracted by glittering objects. Buffon says that it has been known to pull from the fire lighted pieces of wood, to the no small danger of the house.

THE MAGPIE.

PIANET.

(*Corvus Pica*, Lin.—*La Pie*, Buff.)

Its length is about eighteen inches. Bill strong and black; eyes hazel; the head, neck, and breast are of a deep black, which is finely contrasted with the snowy whiteness of the under parts and scapulars; the neck feathers are long, as are also those on the back, which extend towards the rump, leaving only a small space, of a greyish ash colour, between them and the tail coverts, which are black; the plumage in general is glossed with green, purple, and blue, which catch the eye in different lights; the tail is very long, and rather wedge-shaped; the under tail-coverts, thighs, and legs, are black: on the throat and part of the neck there is a kind of feathers, mixed with the others, resembling strong whitish hairs.

This beautiful bird is every where common in England; it is likewise found in various parts of the Continent, but not so far north as Lapland, nor farther south than Italy: it is met with in America, but not commonly, and is migratory there. It feeds, like the Crow, on almost every thing animal as well as vegetable. The female builds her nest with great art, leaving a hole in the side for her admittance, and covering the whole upper part with an interweaving of thorny twigs, closely entangled, thereby securing her retreat from the rude attacks of other birds: but it is not safety alone she consults; the inside is furnished with a sort of mattrass, composed of wool and other soft materials, on which her young repose: she lays seven or eight eggs, of a pale green colour, spotted with black.

The Magpie is crafty and familiar, and may be taught to pronounce words, and even short sentences, and will imitate any particular noise which it hears. It is addicted, like other birds of its kind, to stealing, and will hoard up its provisions. It is smaller than the Jackdaw, and its wings are shorter in proportion; accordingly its flight is not so lofty, nor so well supported: it never undertakes long journies, but flies only from tree to tree, at moderate distances.

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THE NUTCRACKER.

(*Corvus Caryocatactes*, Lin.—*Le Casse Noix*, Buff.)

The length of this bird is thirteen inches. The bill is about two inches long, and black; the eyes are hazel; the upper part of the head and back part of the neck black; its general colour is that of a dusky brown, covered with triangular spots of white; the wings are black; greater wing coverts tipped with white; the tail is white at the tip; the rest black; rump white; legs and claws black.

There are very few instances known of this bird having been seen in England: it is common in Germany, is found also in Sweden and Denmark, and frequents the most mountainous parts of those countries. It makes its nest in holes of trees, and feeds on nuts, acorns, and the kernels of the pine apple. It is said to pierce the bark of trees with its bill, like the Woodpecker. This drawing was made from a stuffed specimen in the museum of the late George Allan, Esq.

THE JAY.

(*Corvus Glandarius*, Lin.—*Le Geai*, Buff.)

This beautiful bird is not more than thirteen inches in length. Its bill is black; eyes white; the feathers on the forehead are white, streaked with black, and form a tuft which it can erect and depress at pleasure; the chin is white, and from the corners of the bill on each side proceeds a broad streak of black, which passes under the eye; the hinder part of the head, the neck, and the back, are of a light cinnamon colour; the breast is of the same colour, but lighter; lesser wing coverts bay; the belly and vent almost white; the greater wing coverts are elegantly barred with black, fine pale blue, and white alternately; the greater quills are black, with pale edges, the bases of some of them white; lesser quills black; those next the body chesnut; the rump is white; tail black, with pale brown edges; legs dirty pale brown.

The Jay is a very common bird in Great Britain, and is found in various parts of Europe. It is distinguished as well for the beautiful arrangement of its colours, as for its harsh, grating voice, and restless disposition. Upon seeing the sportsman, it gives, by its cries, the alarm of danger, and thereby defeats his aim and disappoints him. The Jay builds in woods, and makes an artless nest, composed of sticks, fibres, and tender twigs: the female lays five or six eggs, of a greyish ash colour, mixed with green, and faintly spotted with brown. Mr Pennant observes, that the young ones continue with their parents till the following spring, when they separate to form new pairs.

Birds of this species live on acorns, nuts, seeds, and various kinds of fruits; they will eat eggs, and sometimes destroy young birds in the absence of the old ones. When kept in a domestic state they may be rendered very familiar, and will imitate a variety of words and sounds. We have heard one imitate the sound made by the action of a saw so exactly, that though it was on a Sunday, we could hardly be persuaded that the person who kept it had not a carpenter at work in the house. Another, at the approach of cattle, had learned to hound a cur dog upon them, by whistling and calling upon him by his name: at last, during a severe frost, the dog was, by that means, excited to attack a cow big with calf, when the poor animal fell on the ice, and was much hurt: the Jay was complained of as a nuisance, and its owner was obliged to destroy it.

THE CHATTERER.

SILK TAIL, OR WAXEN CHATTERER.

(*Ampelis Garrulus*, Lin.—*Le Jaseur de Boheme*, Buff.)

THIS beautiful bird is about eight inches in length. Its bill is black, and has a small notch at the end; its eyes, which are black and shining, are placed in a band of black, which passes from the base of the bill to the hinder part of the head; its throat is black; the feathers on the head are long, forming a crest; all the upper parts of the body are of a reddish ash colour; the breast and belly inclining to purple; the vent and tail coverts in some, nearly white; in others, the former reddish chesnut, and the latter ash colour: the tail feathers are black, tipped with pale yellow; the quills are black, the third and fourth tipped on their outer edges with white, the five following with straw colour, but in some bright

yellow; the secondaries are tipped with white, each being pointed with a flat horny substance of a bright vermillion colour. These appendages vary in different subjects; one of those in our possession, had eight on one wing and six on the other. The legs are short and black. It is said the female is not distinguished by the little red waxen appendages at the ends of the second quills; but this we are not able to determine from observation.

This rare bird visits our island only at uncertain intervals. In the years 1790, 1791, and 1803, several of them were taken in Northumberland and Durham, as early as the month of November. Their summer residence is supposed to be the northern parts of Europe, within the arctic circle, whence they spread themselves into other countries, where they remain during winter, and return in the spring to their usual haunts. The general food of this bird is berries of various kinds; in some countries it is said to be extremely fond of grapes: one which we saw in a state of captivity was fed chiefly with hawthorn berries, but from the difficulty of providing it with a sufficient supply of its natural food, it soon died. Only this species of the Chatterer is found in Europe; all the rest are natives of America.

THE STARLING.

STARE.

(*Sturnus Vulgaris*, Lin.—*L'Etourneau*, Buff.)

THE length of this bird is somewhat less than nine inches. The bill is straight, sharp-pointed, and of a yellowish brown—in old birds deep yellow; the nostrils are surrounded by a prominent rim; the eyes are brown; the whole plumage is dark, glossed with green, blue, purple, and copper, but each feather is marked at the end with a pale yellow spot; the wing coverts are edged with yellowish brown; the quill and tail feathers dusky, with light edges: the legs are of a reddish brown.

From the striking similarity, both in form and manners, observable in this bird and those more immediately preceding, we have no scruple in removing it from its usual place, as it evidently forms a connecting link

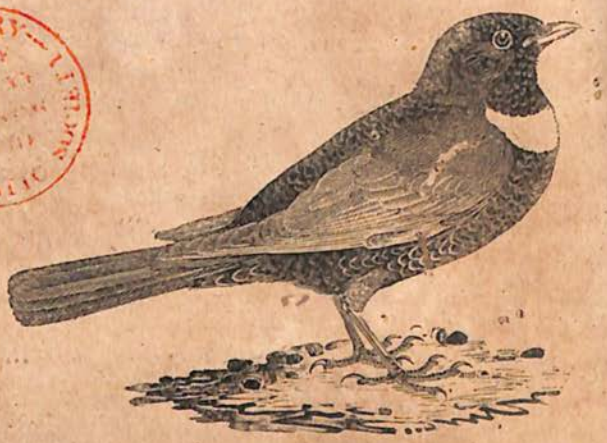
between them, and in a variety of points seems equally allied to both. Few birds are more generally known than the Stare, it being an inhabitant of almost every climate; and as it is a familiar bird, and easily trained in a state of captivity, its habits have been more frequently observed than those of most other birds. The female makes an artless nest in the hollows of trees, rocks, or old walls, and sometimes in cliffs overhanging the sea: she lays four or five eggs, of a pale greenish ash colour: the young birds are of a dusky brown colour till the first moult. In the winter season these birds fly in vast flocks, and may be known at a great distance, by their whirling mode of flight, which Buffon compares to a sort of vortex, in which the collective body performs an uniform circular revolution, and at the same time continues to make a progressive advance. The evening is the time when the Stares assemble in the greatest numbers, and betake themselves to the fens and marshes, where they roost among the reeds: they chatter much in the evening and morning, both when they assemble and disperse. So attached are they to society, that they not only join those of their own species, but also birds of a different kind, and are frequently seen in company with Redwings, Fieldfares, and even with Crows, Jackdaws, and Pigeons. Their principal food consists of worms, snails, and caterpillars; they likewise eat various kinds of grain, seeds, and berries, and are said to be particularly fond of cherries. In a confined state they eat small pieces of raw flesh, bread soaked in water, &c. are very docile, and may easily be taught to repeat short phrases, or whistle tunes with great exactness, and in this state acquire a warbling superior to their native song.

THE ROSE-COLOURED OUZEL

(*Turdus Roseus*, Lin.—*Le Merle Couleur de Rose*, Buff.)

Is the size of a Starling. Its bill is of a carnation colour, blackish at the tip; irides pale; the feathers on the head are long, forming a crest; the head, neck, wings, and tail are black, glossed with shades of blue, purple, and green; its back, rump, breast, belly, and lesser wing coverts pale rose colour, marked with a few irregular dark spots: legs pale red; claws brown.

This bird has been so rarely met with in England that it will scarcely be admitted among such as are purely British. There are, however, a few instances of its being found here; and although not a resident, it sometimes visits us, on which account it must not be passed over unnoticed. It is found in various parts of Europe and Asia, and in most places is migratory. It seems to delight chiefly in the warmer climates; it is fond of locusts, and frequents the places where those destructive insects abound in great numbers; on which account it is said to be held sacred by the inhabitants.



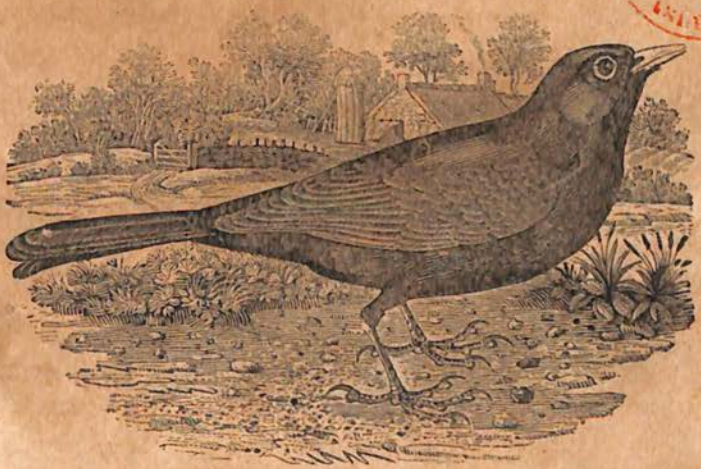
THE RING OUZEL.

(*Turdus Torquatus*, Lin.—*Le Merle à Plastron Blanc*, Buff.)

This bird very much resembles the Blackbird: its general colour is of a dull black or dusky hue; each feather is margined with a greyish ash colour; the bill is dusky; corners of the mouth and inside yellow; eyes hazel; its breast is distinguished by a crescent of pure white, which almost surrounds the neck, and from which it derives its name: its legs are of a dusky brown. The female differs in having the crescent on the breast much less conspicuous, and in some birds wholly wanting, which has occasioned some authors to consider it as a different species, under the name of the Rock Ouzel.

Ring Ouzels are found in various parts of this kingdom, chiefly in the wilder and more mountainous districts of the country: their habits are similar to those of the Blackbird; the female builds her nest in the same manner, and in similar situations, and lays four or five eggs

of the same colour: they feed on insects and berries of various kinds, are fond of grapes, and Buffon observes, during the season of vintage are generally fat, and at that time are esteemed delicious eating. The same author says, that in France they are migratory. In some parts of this kingdom they have been observed to change places, particularly in Hampshire, where they are known generally to stay not more than a fortnight at one time. The foregoing representation was taken from one killed near Bedlington, in Northumberland.



THE BLACK OUZEL.

BLACKBIRD.

(*Turdus Merula*, Lin.—*Le Merle*, Buff.)

THE length of the Blackbird is generally about ten inches. Its plumage is altogether black; the bill, inside of the mouth, and edges of the eye-lids are yellow, as are also the soles of the feet; the legs are of a dirty

yellow. The female is mostly brown, inclining to rust colour on the breast and belly; the bill is dusky, and the legs brown; its song is also very different, so that it has sometimes been mistaken for a bird of a different species.

The males, during the first year, resemble the females so much as not easily to be distinguished from them; but after that, they assume the yellow bill, and other distinguishing marks of their kind. The Blackbird is a solitary bird, frequenting woods and thickets, chiefly of evergreens, such as holly, pines, firs, &c. especially where there are perennial springs, which together afford it both shelter and subsistence. Wild Blackbirds feeds on berries, fruits, insects, and worms; they never fly in flocks like Thrushes; they pair early, and begin to warble nearly as soon as any other of the songsters of the grove. The female builds her nest in bushes or low trees, and lays four or five eggs, of a bluish green colour, marked irregularly with dusky spots. The young birds are easily brought up tame, and may be taught to whistle a variety of tunes, for which their clear, loud, and melodious tones are well adapted. They are restless and timorous birds, easily alarmed, and difficult of access; but Buffon observes that they are more restless than cunning, and more timorous than suspicious, as they readily suffer themselves to be caught with bird-lime, nooses, and all sorts of snares. They are never kept in aviaries; for, when shut up with other birds, they pursue and harass their companions in slavery unceasingly, for which reason they are generally confined in cages apart. In some counties of England this bird is called simply the Ouzel.

MISSEL THRUSH.

MISSEL BIRD, OR SHRITE.

(Turdus Viscivorus, Lin.—*La Draine*, Buff.)

THE length of this bird is about eleven inches. The bill is dusky, the base of the lower bill yellow; the eyes hazel; the head, back, and lesser coverts of the wings are of a deep olive brown, the latter tipped with white; the lower part of the back and rump tinged with yellow; the cheeks are of a yellowish white, spotted with brown, as are also the breast and belly, which are marked with larger spots of a dark brown colour; the quills are brown, with pale edges; tail feathers the same, the three outermost tipped with white: the legs are yellow; claws black. The female builds her nest in bushes or low trees, and lays four or five eggs, of a greenish blue colour, marked with red spots. Its nest is made of moss, leaves, &c. lined with dry grass, strengthened on the outside with small twigs. It begins to sing very early, often on the turn of the year in blowing showery weather, whence in some places it is called the Storm-cock. Its note of anger is very loud and harsh, between a chatter and a shriek, which accounts for some of its names. It feeds on various kinds of berries, particularly those of the misletoe, of which bird-lime is made. It was formerly believed that the plant of that name was only propagated by the seed which passed the digestive organs of this bird, whence arose the proverb "*Turdus malum sibi cacat;*" it likewise feeds on caterpillars and various kinds of insects, with which it also feeds its young.

This bird is found in various parts of Europe, and is said to be migratory in some places, but continues in England the whole year, and frequently has two broods.

THE FIELDFARE.

(*Turdus Pilaris*, Lin.—*La Litorne, ou Tourdelle*, Buff.)

This is somewhat less than the Missel Thrush; its length ten inches. The bill is yellow; each corner of the mouth is furnished with a few black bristly hairs; the eye is light brown; the top of the head and back part of the neck are of a light ash colour, the former spotted with black; the back and coverts of the wings are of a deep hoary brown; the rump ash coloured; the throat and breast are yellow, regularly spotted with black; the belly and thighs of a yellowish white; the tail brown, inclining to black; the legs dusky yellowish brown; in young birds yellow.

We have seen a variety of this bird, of which the head and neck were of a yellowish white; the rest of the body was nearly of the same colour, mixed with a few brown feathers; the spots on the breast were faint and

indistinct; the quill feathers were perfectly white, except one or two on each side, which were brown; the tail was marked in a similar manner.

The Fieldfare is only a visitant in this island, making its appearance about the beginning of October, in order to avoid the rigorous winters of the north, whence it sometimes comes in great flocks, according to the severity of the season, and leaves us about the latter end of February or the beginning of March, and retires to Russia, Sweden, Norway, and as far as Siberia and Kamtschatka. Buffon observes that they do not arrive in France till the beginning of December, that they assemble in flocks of two or three thousand, and feed on ripe services, of which they are extremely fond: during the winter they feed on haws and other berries; they likewise eat worms, snails, and slugs.

Fieldfares seem of a more sociable disposition than the Throstles or the Missels: they are sometimes seen singly, but in general form very numerous flocks, and fly in a body; and though they often spread themselves through the fields in search of food, they seldom lose sight of each other, but, when alarmed, fly off, and collect together upon the same tree.

THE THROSTLE.

THRUSH, GREY BIRD, OR MAVIS.

(*Turdus Musicus*, Lin.—*La Grive*, Buff.)

THIS is larger than the Redwing, but much less than the Missel, to which it bears a strong resemblance both in form and colours. A small notch is observable at the end of the bill, which belongs to this and every bird of the Thrush kind: the throat is white, and the spots on the breast more regularly formed than those of the Missel Thrush, being of a conical shape; the inside of the wings and the mouth are yellow, as are also the legs; the claws are strong and black.

The Throstle is distinguished among our singing birds by the clearness and fullness of its note; it charms us not only with the sweetness, but the variety of its song, which it begins early in the spring, and continues during part of the summer. This bold and pleasing songster,

from his high station, seems to command the concert of the grove, whilst in the beautiful language of the poet,

> " The Jay, the Rook, the Daw,
> " And each harsh pipe (discordant heard alone)
> " Aid the full concert, while the Stock-Dove breathes
> " A melan holy murmur through the whole."

The female builds her nest generally in bushes; it is composed of dried grass, with a little earth or clay intermixed, and lined with rotten wood; she lays five or six eggs, of a pale blue colour, marked with dusky spots.

Although this species is not considered with us as migratory, it has, nevertheless, been observed in some places in great numbers during the spring and summer, where not one was to be seen in the winter, which has induced an opinion that they either shift their quarters entirely, or take shelter in the more retired parts of the woods. The Throstle is migratory in France: M. de Buffon says that it appears in Burgundy about the end of September, before the Redwing and Fieldfare, and that it feeds upon the ripe grapes, and sometimes does much damage to the vineyard. The females of all the Thrush kind are very similar to the males, and differ chiefly in a less degree of brilliancy in the colours.

THE REDWING

SWINEPIPE, OR WIND THRUSH.

(*Turdus Iliacus*, Lin.—*Le Mauvis*, Buff.)

Is not more than eight inches in length. The bill is of a dark brown colour; eyes deep hazel; the plumage in general is similar to that of the Thrush, but a white streak over the eye distinguishes it from that bird; the belly is not quite so much spotted, and the sides of the body and the feathers under the wings are tinged with red, which is its particular characteristic; whence also it derives its name.

These birds make their appearance a few days before the Fieldfare,* and are generally seen with them after

* A Redwing was taken up November 7th, 1785, at six o'clock in the morning, which, on its approach to land, had flown against the light-house at Tynemouth, and was so stunned that it fell to the ground and died soon after; the light most probably had attracted its attention.

their arrival; they frequent the same places, eat the same food, and are very similar to them in manners. Like the Fieldfare, they leave us in the spring, for which reason their song is quite unknown to us, but it is said to be very pleasing. The female builds her nest in low bushes or hedges, and lays six eggs, of a greenish blue colour, spotted with black.

This and the former are delicate eating: the Romans held them in such estimation that they kept thousands of them together in aviaries, and fed them with a sort of paste made of bruised figs and flour, and various other kinds of food, to improve the delicacy and flavour of their flesh: these aviaries were so contrived as to admit light barely sufficiently to direct them to their food; every object which might tend to remind them of their former liberty was carefully kept out of sight, such as the fields, the woods, the birds, or whatever might disturb the repose necessary for their improvement. Under this management these birds fattened, to the great profit of their proprietors, who sold them to the Roman epicures for three denarii, or about two shillings sterling each.

THE CUCKOO.

THE GOWK.

(*Cuculus Canorus*, Lin.—*Le Coucou*, Buff.)

Length fourteen inches; breadth twenty-five: its bill is black and somewhat bent; eyes yellow; inside of the mouth red; its head, neck, back, and wing coverts are of a pale blue or dove colour, which is darkest on the head and back, and palest on the fore part of the neck and rump; its breast and belly are white, elegantly crossed with wavy bars of black; the quill feathers are dusky, their inner webs marked with large oval white spots; the tail is long; the two middle feathers are black, with white tips; the others dusky, marked with alternate spots of white on each side the shaft: the legs are short, and of a yellow colour; toes two forward, two backward; claws white.

The Cuckoo visits us early in the spring; its well-known

cry is generally heard about the middle of April, and ceases the latter end of June; its stay is short, the old Cuckoos being said to quit this country early in July. Cuckoos build no nest; and, what is more extraordinary, the female deposits her solitary egg in the nest of another bird, by whom it is hatched. The nest she chuses for this purpose is generally selected from the following, viz: the Hedge-sparrow's, Water-wagtail's, Titlark's, Yellow-hammer's, Green Linnet's, or the Winchat's. Of these it has been observed that she shews a much greater partiality to that of the Hedge-sparrow than to any of the rest.

We owe the following account of the economy of this singular bird in the disposal of its egg, to the accurate observations of Mr Edward Jenner, communicated to the Royal Society, and published in the 78th volume of their transactions, part 2:—He observes that during the time the Hedge-sparrow is laying her eggs, which generally takes up four or five days, the Cuckoo contrives to deposit her egg among the rest, leaving the future care of it entirely to the Hedge-sparrow. This intrusion often occasions some discomposure, for the old Hedge-sparrow at intervals, whilst she is sitting, not only throws out some of her own eggs, but sometimes injures them in such a way that they become addle, so that it frequently happens that not more than two or three of the parent bird's eggs are hatched with that of the Cuckoo; and, what is very remarkable, it has never been observed that the Hedge-sparrow has either thrown out or injured the egg of the Cuckoo. When the Hedge-sparrow has sat her usual time, and has disengaged the young Cuckoo and some of her own offspring

from the shell, her own young ones, and any of her eggs that remain unhatched, are soon turned out; the young Cuckoo then remains in full possession of the nest, and is the sole object of the future care of its foster parent. The young birds are not previously killed, nor the eggs demolished, but all are left to perish together, either entangled in the bush which contains the nest, or lying on the ground under it. Mr Jenner next proceeds to account for this seemingly unnatural circumstance; and as what he has advanced is the result of his own repeated observations, we shall give it nearly in his own words:—

"On the 18th June, 1787, Mr J. examined the nest of a Hedge-sparrow, which then contained a Cuckoo's and three Hedge-sparrow's eggs. On inspecting it the day following, the bird had hatched, but the nest then contained only a young Cuckoo and one young Hedge-sparrow. The nest was placed so near the extremity of a hedge, that he could distinctly see what was going forward in it; and, to his great astonishment, he saw the young Cuckoo, though so lately hatched, in the act of turning out the young Hedge-sparrow. The mode of accomplishing this was curious: the little animal, with the assistance of its rump and wings, contrived to get the bird upon its back, and making a lodgement for its burden by elevating its elbows, clambered backwards with it up the side of the nest till it reached the top, where, resting for a moment, it threw off its load with a jerk, and quite disengaged it from the nest: after remaining a short time in this situation, and feeling about with the extremities of its wings, as if to be convinced that the business was properly executed, it dropped into the nest again." Mr J. made several experiments in

different nests, by repeatedly putting in an egg to the young Cuckoo, which he always found to be disposed of in the same manner. It is very remarkable, that nature seems to have provided for the singular disposition of the Cuckoo in its formation at this period; for, different from other newly hatched birds, its back, from the scapulæ downwards, is very broad, with a considerable depression in the middle, which seems intended by nature for the purpose of giving a more secure lodgement to the egg of the Hedge-sparrow or its young one, while the young Cuckoo is employed in removing either of them from the nest. When it is above twelve days old, this cavity is quite filled up, the back assumes the shape of nestling birds in general, and at that time the disposition for turning out its companion entirely ceases. The smallness of the Cuckoo's egg, which, in general, is less than that of the Hedge-sparrow,* is another circumstance to be attended to in this surprising transaction, and seems to account for the parent Cuckoo's depositing it in the nests of such small birds only as have been mentioned. If she were to do this in the nest of a bird which produced a larger egg, and consequently a larger nestling, its design would probably be frustrated; the young Cuckoo would be unequal to the task of becoming sole possessor of the nest, and might fall a sacrifice to the superior strength of its partners.

Mr Jenner observes, that it sometimes happens that two Cuckoo's eggs are deposited in the same nest, and gives the following instance of one which fell under his observation. Two Cuckoos and a Hedge-sparrow were

* The Cuckoo's eggs which have come under our observation were nearly the size of those of the Thrush.

hatched in the same nest; one Hedge-sparrow's egg remained unhatched: in a few hours a contest began between the Cuckoos for possession of the nest, which continued undetermined till the afternoon of the following day, when one of them, which was somewhat superior in size, turned out the other, together with the young Hedge-sparrow and the unhatched egg. This contest, he adds, was very remarkable; the combatants alternately appeared to have the advantage, as each carried the other several times nearly to the top of the nest, and then sunk down again oppressed with the weight of its burthen; till at length, after various efforts, the stronger prevailed, and was afterwards brought up by the Hedge-sparrow. It would exceed our limits to give a detail of the observations made by this ingenious enquirer; we must therefore refer the reader to the work itself, in which he will find a variety of interesting matter respecting this singular bird, whose history has for ages been enveloped in fable, and mixed with unaccountable stories, founded in ignorance and superstition. At what period the young Cuckoos leave this country is not precisely known; Mr Jenner supposes they go off in succession, as soon as they are capable of taking care of themselves. That some of them remain here in a torpid state, has already been observed.* Buffon mentions several instances of young Cuckoos having been kept in cages, which, probably for want of proper nutriment, did not survive the winter. We knew of one which was preserved through the winter by being fed with worms, insects, soaked bread, and small pieces of flesh. The plumage of the Cuckoo varies greatly at different periods of its life. In

* See the Introduction.

young Cuckoos the bill, legs, and tail are nearly the same as those of the old ones; the eye is blue; the throat, neck, breast, and belly are elegantly barred with a dark brown on a light ground; the back is of a lead colour, mixed with brown, and faintly barred with white; the tail feathers are irregularly marked with black, light brown, and white, and tipped with white: the legs are yellow.

THE WRYNECK.

(*Jynx Torquilla*, Lin.—*Le Torcol*, Buff.)

The principal colours which distinguish this beautiful little bird consist of different shades of brown, but so elegantly arranged as to form a picture of the most exquisite neatness: from the hinder part of the head down to the middle of the back there runs an irregular line of

dark brown inclining to black; the rest of the back is ash coloured, streaked and powdered with brown; the throat and under side of the neck are of a reddish brown, crossed with fine bars of black; the breast, belly, and thighs are of a light ash colour, marked with triangular spots, irregularly dispersed; the larger quill feathers are marked on the outer webs with alternate spots of dark brown and rust colour, which, when the wing is closed, give it the appearance of chequered work; the rest of the wing and the scapulars are nicely freckled, and shaded with brown spots of different sizes; the tail feathers are marked with irregular bars of black, the intervening spaces being finely freckled, and powdered with dark brown spots; its bill is rather long, sharp pointed, and of a pale lead colour; its eyes are light brown: but what chiefly distinguishes this singular bird is the structure of its tongue, which is of considerable length, of a cylindrical form, and capable of being pushed forwards and drawn into its bill again; it is furnished with a horny substance at the end, with which it secures its prey, and brings it to its mouth: its legs are short and slender; the toes placed two before and two behind; the claws sharp, much hooked, and formed for climbing the branches of trees, on which it can run in all directions with great facility. It makes an artless nest of dry grass upon dusty rotten wood, in holes of trees, the entrance to which is so small as scarcely to admit the hand, on which account its eggs are come at with much difficulty; according to Buffon, they are perfectly white, and from eight to ten in number.

This curious bird, though in many respects nearly related to the family of the Woodpeckers, being similar to

that tribe in the formation of its bill and feet, yet never associates with them, and seems to constitute a genus of itself. It is found in various parts of Europe, and generally appears with us a few days before the Cuckoo. Its food consists chiefly of ants and other insects, of which it finds great abundance lodged in the bark and crevices of trees. The stomach of one which we opened was full of undigested parts of ants. It is said to frequent the places where ant-hills are, into which it darts its tongue, and draws out its prey. It holds itself very erect on the branch of the tree where it sits; its body is almost bent backward, whilst it writhes its head and neck by a slow and almost involuntary motion, not unlike the waving wreaths of a serpent. It is a very solitary bird, and leads a sequestered life: it is never seen with any other society but that of its female, and this is only transitory, for as soon as the domestic union is dissolved, which is in the month of September, they retire and migrate by themselves.

THE WOODPECKERS.

Of these only three or four kinds are found in Great Britain. Their characters are striking, and their manners singular. The bill is large, strong, and fitted for its employment: the end of it is formed like a wedge, with which it pierces the bark of trees, and bores into the wood in which its food is lodged. Its neck is short and thick, and furnished with powerful muscles, which enable it to strike with such force as to be heard at a considerable distance: its tongue is long and taper; at the end of it there is a hard horny substance, which penetrates into the crevices of trees, and extracts the insects and their eggs which are lodged there: the tail consists of ten stiff, sharp-pointed feathers, bent inwards, by which it supports itself on the trunks of trees while in search of food; for this purpose its feet are short and thick, and its toes, which are placed two forward and two backward, are armed with strong hooked claws, by which it clings firmly, and creeps up and down in all directions.

M. Buffon, with his usual warmth of imagination, thus describes the seemingly dull and solitary life of the Woodpecker:—"Of all the birds which earn their subsistence by spoil, none leads a life so laborious and painful as the Woodpecker: nature has condemned it to incessant toil and slavery. While others freely employ their courage or address, and either shoot on rapid wing or lurk in close ambush, the Woodpecker is constrained to drag out an insipid existence in boring the bark and hard fibres of trees to extract its humble prey. Necessity never suffers any intermission of its labours, never grants an interval of sound repose; often during the night it

sleeps in the same painful posture as in the fatigues of the day. It never shares the sports of the other inhabitants of the air, it joins not their vocal concerts, and its wild cries and saddening tones, while they disturb the silence of the forest, express constraint and effort. Its movements are quick, its gestures full of inquietude, its looks coarse and vulgar; it shuns all society, even that of its own kind; and when it is prompted to seek a companion, its appetite is not softened by delicacy of feeling."

THE GREEN WOODPECKER.

WOODSPITE, HIGH-HOE, HEW-HOLE, OR PICK-A-TREE.*

(*Picus Viridis*, Lin.—*Le Pic Verd*, Buff.)

This is the largest of the British kinds, being thirteen

* Wallis, in his History of Northumberland, observes that it is called by the common people Pick-a-tree, also Rain Fowl, from its being more loud and noisy before rain. The old Romans called them *Pluviæ aves* for the same reason.

inches in length. Its bill is two inches long, of a triangular shape, and of a dark horn colour; the outer circle of the eye is white, surrounding another of red; the top of the head is of a bright crimson, which extends down the hinder part of the neck, ending in a point behind; the eye is surrounded by a black space; and from each corner of the bill there is a crimson streak pointing downwards; the back and wing coverts are of an olive green; the rump yellow; the quill feathers are dusky, barred on the outer web with black and white; the bastard wing is spotted with white; the sides of the head and all the under parts of the body are white, slightly tinged with green; the tail is marked with bars like the wings; the legs are greenish. The female differs from the male in not having the red mark from the corner of the mouth; she makes her nest in the hollow of a tree, fifteen or twenty feet from the ground. Buffon observes that both male and female labour by turns in boring through the sound part of the wood, sometimes to a considerable depth, until they penetrate to that which is decayed and rotten, where she lays five or six eggs, of a greenish colour, marked with small black spots.

The Green Woodpecker is seen more frequently on the ground than the other kinds, particularly where there are ant-hills. It inserts its long tongue into the holes through which the ants issue, and draws out those insects in abundance. Sometimes, with its feet and bill, it makes a breach in the nest, and devours them at its ease, together with their eggs. The young ones climb up and down the trees before they are able to fly: they roost very early, and repose in their holes till day.

THE GREATER SPOTTED WOODPECKER.

WITWALL.

(*Picus Major*, Lin.—*L'Epeiche, ou le Pic varie*, Buff.)

Its length is somewhat more than nine inches. The bill is of a dark horn colour, very strong at the base; the upper and under sides are formed by high-pointed ridges, which run along the middle of each; it is exceedingly sharp at the end; the eyes are reddish, encircled with a large white spot, which extends to the back part of the head, on which there is a spot of crimson; the forehead is buff colour; the top of the head black; on the back part of the neck there are two white spots, separated by a line of black; the scapulars and tips of the wing coverts are white; the rest of the plumage on the upper part of the body is black; the tail is black, the outer feathers marked with white spots; the throat, breast, and part of the belly are of a yellowish white;

the vent and lower part of the belly crimson; the legs and feet of a lead colour. The female has not the red spot on the back of the head.

This bird is common in England. Buffon says that it strikes against the trees with brisker and harder blows than the Green Woodpecker. It creeps with great ease in all directions upon the branches of trees, and is with difficulty seen, as it instantly avoids the sight by creeping behind a branch, where it remains concealed.

THE MIDDLE-SPOTTED WOODPECKER.

(*Picus Medius*, Lin.—*Le Pic varié a Tête Rouge*, Buff.)

This bird is somewhat less than the former, and differs from it chiefly in having the top of the head wholly crimson; in every other respect the colours are much the same, though more obscure. Buffon gives a figure of it in his *Planches Enluminees*, but considers it as only a variety of the former.

THE LESSER SPOTTED WOODPECKER.

HICKWALL.

(*Picus Minor*, Lin.—*Le petit Epeiche*, Buff.)

This is the smallest of our species, being only five inches and a half in length; weight nearly one ounce. Its general plumage is very similar to that of the larger species, but without the red under the tail, and the large white patches on the shoulders; the under parts of the body are of a dirty white; the legs lead colour. Buffon says, that in winter it draws near houses and vineyards, that it nestles like the former in holes of trees, and sometimes disputes possession with the Colemouse, which it compels to give up its lodging.

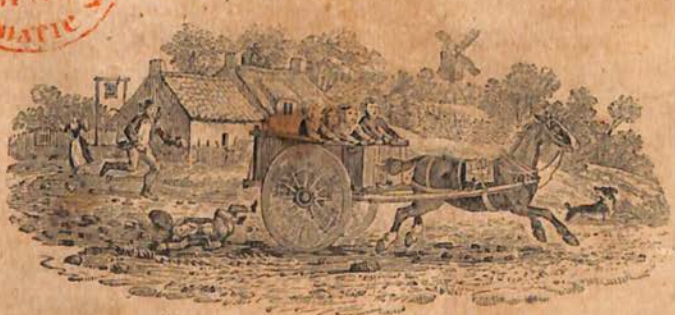
THE NUTHATCH.

NUTJOBBER, WOODCRACKER.

(*Sitta Europea*, Lin.—*La Sittelle ou le Torchepot*, Buff.)

Its length is near six inches; the bill strong, black above, beneath almost white; the eyes hazel; a black stroke passes over each eye, from the bill, extending down the side of the neck as far as the shoulder; all the upper part of the body is of a fine blue grey colour; the cheeks and chin are white; breast and belly of a pale orange colour; sides marked with streaks of chesnut; quills dusky; its tail is short, the two middle feathers are grey, the rest dusky, three of the outermost spotted with white; the legs pale yellow; the claws large, sharp, and much bent, the back claw very strong; when extended the foot measures one inch and three quarters.

This, like the Woodpecker, frequents woods, and is a shy and solitary bird: the female lays her eggs in holes of trees, frequently in those which have been deserted by the Woodpecker. During the time of incubation she is assiduously attended by the male, who supplies her with food; she is easily driven from her nest, but on being disturbed hisses like a snake. The Nuthatch feeds on caterpillars, beetles, and various kinds of insects; it likewise eat nuts, and is very expert in cracking them so as to come at the contents: having placed a nut fast in a chink, it takes its stand a little above, and striking it with all its force, breaks the shell and catches up the kernel. Like the Woodpecker, it moves up and down the trunks of trees, with great facility, in search of food. It does not migrate, but in the winter approaches nearer inhabited places, and is sometimes seen in orchards and gardens. The young ones are esteemed very good eating.



THE HOOPOE.

(*Upupa Epops*, Lin.—*Le Hupe ou Puput*, Buff.)

Its length is twelve inches; breadth nineteen. The bill is about two inches long, black, slender, and somewhat curved; the eyes hazel; the tongue very short and triangular; the head is ornamented with a crest, consisting of a double row of feathers, of a pale orange colour, tipped with black, the highest about two inches in length; the neck is of a pale reddish brown; breast and belly white, and in young birds marked with various dusky lines pointing downwards; the back, scapulars, and wings are crossed with broad bars of black and white; the lesser coverts of the wings light brown; the rump is white; the tail consists of ten feathers, each marked with white, and, when closed, assumes the form of a crescent, the horns pointing downwards: the legs are short and black.

This is the only species of its kind found in this kingdom; and is not very common with us, being seen only at uncertain periods. The foregoing representation was taken from a very fine one, shot near Bedlington, Northumberland, and sent for this work, by the Rev. Henry Cotes. In its stomach were found the claws and other indigestible parts of insects of the beetle tribe: it was alive some time after being shot, and walked about, erecting its tail and crest in a very pleasing manner. The female is said to have two or three broods in the year; she makes no nest, but lays her eggs, generally about four or five in number, in the hollow of a tree, and sometimes in a hole of a wall, or even on the ground. Buffon says, that he has sometimes found a soft lining of moss, wool, or feathers, in the nests of these birds, and supposes that, in this case, they may have used the deserted nest of some other bird. Its food consists chiefly of insects, with the remains of which its nest is sometimes so filled as to become extremely offensive. It is a solitary bird, two of them being seldom seen together: in Egypt, where they are very common, they are seen only in small flocks. Its crest usually falls behind on its neck, except when it is surprised or irritated; it then stands erect; and its tail also, as well as its crest, is generally at the same time erected, and spread like a fan.

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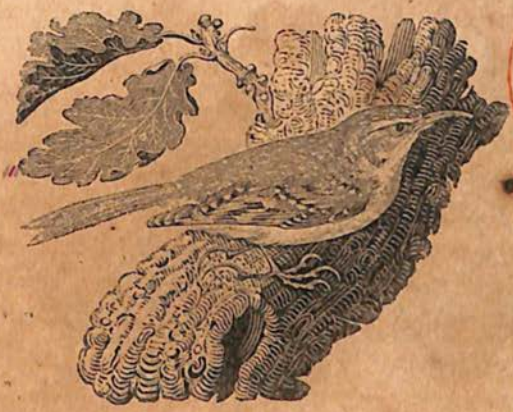


THE CREEPER.

(*Certhia familiaris*, Lin.—*Le Grimpereau*, Buff.)

Its length is five inches and a half; the body is about the size of that of the Wren. Its bill is long, slender, and curved, the upper mandible brown, the lower whitish; eyes hazel; the head, neck, back, and wing coverts are of a dark brown, variegated with streaks of a lighter hue; the throat, breast, and belly are of a silvery white; the rump tawny; the quills are dusky, edged with tawny, and marked with bars of the same colour; the tips are white; above each eye a small dark line passes towards the neck, above which there is a line of white: the tail is long, and consists of twelve stiff feathers, of a tawny colour, pointed and forked at the end: the legs are short, and of a brown colour; the claws are long, sharp, and much hooked, by which it is enabled to run with great facility on all sides of small branches of trees in quest of insects and their eggs, which constitute its food. Although very common, it is not seen without difficulty,

from the ease with which, on the appearance of any one, it escapes to the opposite side of the tree. It builds its nest early in the spring, in a hole of a tree: the female lays from five to seven eggs, of an ash colour, marked at the end with spots of a deeper hue.

OF THE PASSERINE ORDER.

This numerous class constitutes the fifth order in Mr Pennant's arrangement of British Birds, and includes a great variety of different kinds: of these we have detached the Stare, the Thrush, and the Chatterer, and have joined them to the Pies, to which they seem to have a greater affinity. Those which follow are distinguished by their lively and active dispositions, their beautiful plumage, and delightful melody. Of this order consist those amazing flocks of small birds of almost every description—those numerous families, which, universally diffused throughout every part of the known world, people the woods, the fields, and even the largest and most populous cities, in countless multitudes, and every where enliven, diversify, and adorn the face of nature. These are not less conspicuous for their usefulness, than for their numbers and variety: they are of infinite advantage in the economy of nature, in destroying myriads of noxious insects, which would otherwise teem in every part of the animal and vegetable systems, and would pervade and choke up all the avenues of life and health. Insects and their eggs, worms, berries, and seeds of almost every kind, form the varied mass from which these busy little tribes derive their support.

The characters of the Passerine order, which are as various as their habits and dispositions, will be best seen in the description of each particular species. It may be necessary, however, to observe, that they naturally divide themselves into two distinct kinds, namely, the hard-billed or seed birds, and the slender or soft-billed

birds: the former are furnished with stout bills of a conical shape, and very sharp at the point, admirably fitted for the purpose of breaking the hard external coverings of the seeds of plants from the kernels, which constitute the principal part of the food; the latter are remarkable for the softness and delicacy of their bills: their food consists altogether of small worms, insects, the larvæ of insects, and their eggs, which they find deposited in immense profusion on the leaves and bark of trees, in chinks and crevices of stones, and even in small masses on the bare ground, so that there is hardly a portion of matter that does not contain a plentiful supply of food for this diligent race of beings.

" Full nature swarms with life;
" The flowery leaf
" Wants not its soft inhabitants. Secure
" Within its winding citadel, the stone
" Holds multitudes. But chief the forest-boughs,
" That dance unnumber'd to the playful breeze,
" The downy orchard, and the melting pulp
" Of mellow fruit, the nameless nations feed
" Of evanescent insects.

OF THE GROSSBEAK.

This genus is not numerous in this island, and of those which we call ours, most of them are only visitors, making a short stay with us, and leaving us again to breed and rear their young in other countries. They are in general shy and solitary, living chiefly in woods at a distance from the habitations of men. Their vocal powers are not great; and as they do not add much to the general harmony of the woods which they inhabit, they are consequently not much known or sought after. Their most conspicuous character is the thickness and strength of their bills, by which they are enabled to break the stones of various kinds of fruits, and other hard substances on which they feed. Their general appearance is very similar to birds of the Finch kind, of which they may be reckoned the principal branch.

THE CROSS-BILL.

SHEL-APPLE.

(Loxia Curvirostra, Lin.—*Le Bec Croisé*, Buff.)

THIS bird is about the size of a Lark, being nearly seven inches in length. It is distinguished by the peculiar formation of its bill, the upper and under mandibles curving in opposite directions, and crossing each other at the points:* its eyes are hazel; its general colour is

* This singular construction of the bill is considered by M. Buffon as a defect or error in nature, rather than a permanent feature, merely because, in some subjects, the bill crosses to the left, and in others to the right, arising, as he supposes, from the way in which the bird has been accustomed to use its bill, by applying either the one side or the other to lay hold of its food. This mode of reasoning, however, proves very defective, when we consider that this peculiarity is confined to a single species, for no other bird in nature is subject to a similar variation from the general construction, although there are many other birds which feed upon the same kinds of hard substances, but nevertheless, do not experience any change in the formation and structure of their bills; neither

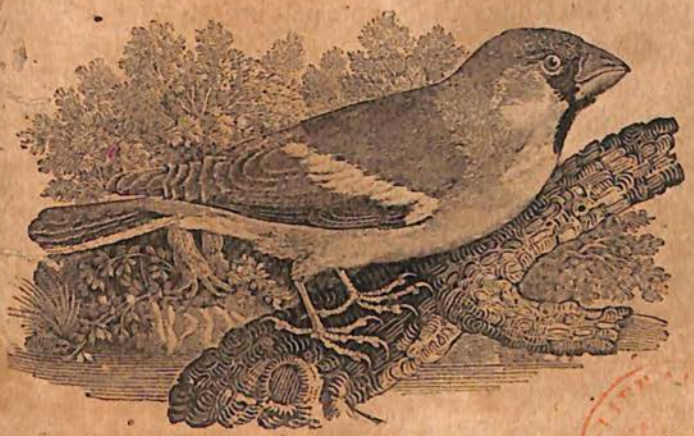
reddish, mixed with brown on the upper parts; the under parts are considerably paler, being almost white at the belly and vent; the wings are short, not reaching farther than the setting on of the tail, and of a brown colour; the tail is of the same colour, and somewhat forked: the legs are black. Individuals vary in the colours of their plumage; among a great number hardly two of them are exactly similar; they likewise vary with the season, and according to the age of the bird. Edwards paints the male of a rose colour, and the female of a yellowish green, mixed more or less with brown. Both sexes appear very different at different times of the year.

The Cross-bill is an inhabitant of the colder climates, and has been found as far as Greenland. It breeds in Russia, Sweden, Poland, and Germany, in the mountains of Switzerland, and among the Alps and Pyrenees, whence it migrates in vast flocks into other countries. It sometimes is met with in great numbers in this country,

has the argument, drawn from the supposed exuberance of growth in the bills of these birds, any better foundation, as that likewise may be applied to other birds, and the same question will occur—namely, Why is not the same effect produced? This ingenious but fanciful writer, in the further prosecution of his argument, seems to increase the difficulties in which it is involved. He observes, "that the bill, hooked upwards and downwards, and bent in opposite directions, seems to have been formed for the purpose of detaching the scales of the fir cones and obtaining the seeds lodged beneath them, which are the principal food of the bird. It raises each scale with its lower mandible, and breaks it with the upper." We think there needs no stronger argument than this to prove, that Nature, in all her operations, works by various means; and although these are not always clear to our limited understandings, the good of all her creatures is the one great end to which they are all directed.

but its visits are not regular,* as in some years it is rarely to be seen. Its principal food is said to be the seeds of the pine-tree; it is observed to hold the cone in one claw like the Parrot, and when kept in a cage, has all the actions of that bird, climbing, by means of its hooked bill, from the lower to the upper bars of its cage. From its mode of scrambling, and the beauty of its colours, it has been called by some the German Parrot. The female is said to begin to build as early as January; she places her nest under the bare branches of the pine-tree, fixing it with the resinous matter which exudes from that tree, and besmearing it on the outside with the same substance, so that the melted snow or rain cannot penetrate it.

* We have met with it on the top of Blackstone-edge, between Rochdale and Halifax, in the month of August.



THE GROSBEAK.

HAWFINCH.

(*Loxia Coccothraustes*, Lin.—*Le Gros-bec*, Buff.)

LENGTH nearly seven inches. Bill of a horn colour, conical, and prodigiously thick at the base; eyes ash coloured; the space between the bill and the eye, and thence to the chin and throat, is black; the top of the head is of a reddish chesnut, as are also the cheeks, but somewhat paler; the back part of the neck is of a greyish ash colour; the back and lesser wing coverts chesnut; the greater wing coverts are grey, in some almost white, forming a band across the wing; the quills are all black, excepting some of the secondaries nearest the body, which are brown; the four outer quills seem as if clipped off at the ends; the prime quills have each of them a spot of white about the middle of the inner web; the breast and belly are of a pale rust colour, fading almost to a white at the vent; the tail is black, excepting the ends of the middle feathers, which are grey; the outer ones are

tipped with white; the legs are pale brown. The female greatly resembles the male, but her colours are less vivid, and the space between the bill and the eye is grey instead of black. These birds vary considerably, as scarcely two of them are alike: in some the head is wholly black; in others the whole upper part of the body is of that colour; and others have been met with entirely white, excepting the wings.

This species is an inhabitant of the temperate climates, from Spain, Italy, and France, as far as Sweden, but visits this island only occasionally, and generally in winter, when it is probably driven over in its passage from its northern haunts to the milder climates of France and Italy. It breeds in these countries, but is no where numerous. Buffon says it is a shy and solitary bird, with little or no song; it generally inhabits the woods during summer, and in winter resorts near the hamlets and farms. The female builds her nest in trees, of small dry roots and grass, lined with warmer materials. The eggs are roundish, of a bluish green, spotted with brown. She feeds her young with insects, chrysalids, and other soft, nutritious substances.

THE PINE GROSBEAK.

GREATEST BULLFINCH.

(*Loxia Enucleator*, Lin.—*Le Dur-bec*, Buff.)

This exceeds the last in size, being nine inches in length. The bill is dusky, very stout at the base, and somewhat hooked at the tip: the head, neck, breast, and rump are of a rose-coloured crimson; the back and lesser wing coverts black, each feather edged with reddish brown; the greater wing coverts tipped with white,

forming two bars on the wing; the quills are black, with pale edges; the secondaries the same, but edged with white; the belly and vent are straw-coloured; the tail is marked as the quills, and is somewhat forked; the legs are brown.

This bird is found only in the northern parts of this island and of Europe; but it is common in various parts of North America, visiting the southern settlements in the winter, and retiring northwards in the summer for the purpose of breeding: like the Cross-bill, it frequents the pine-forests, and feeds on the seeds of that tree. The female makes her nest on trees, at a small distance from the ground, and lays four white eggs, which are hatched in June.

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THE GREEN GROSBEAK.

GREEN FINCH, OR GREEN LINNET.

(*Loxia Chloris*, Lin.—*Le Verdier*, Buff.)

The bill is of a pale reddish brown, or flesh colour; eyes dark; the plumage in general is of a yellowish green; the top of the head, neck, back, and lesser coverts olive green; the greater coverts and outer edges of the secondary quills ash coloured; the vent and tail coverts the same, dashed with yellow; the rump yellow.

These birds are common in every part of Great Britain. They do not migrate, but change their quarters according to the season of the year. They keep together in small flocks during the extremity of winter, when they draw to the shelter of villages and farm yards, and disperse to breed in the spring. The female makes her nest in hedges or low bushes; it is composed of dry grass, and lined with hair, wool, and other warm materials; she lays five or six eggs, of a pale greenish colour,

marked at the larger end with spots of a reddish brown; she is so close a sitter, that she may sometimes be taken on her nest. The male is very attentive to his mate during the time of incubation, and takes his turn in sitting. Though not distinguished for its song, this bird is sometimes kept in a cage, and soon becomes familiar.

ROYAL ASIATIC

THE BULLFINCH.

ALP, OR NOPE.

(*Loxia Pyrrhula*, Lin.—*Le Bouvreuil*, Buff.)

THE bill is dusky; eyes black; the upper part of the head, the ring round the bill, and the origin of the neck, are of a fine glossy black;* the back ash colour; the breast and belly red; wings and tail black; the upper tail coverts and vent are white; legs dark brown. The female is very like the male, but the colours in general are less bright, and the under parts of a reddish brown.†

* Hence in some countries it is called *Monk* or *Pope*, and in Scotland it is not improperly denominated *Coally-hood*.

† The Bullfinch sometimes changes its plumage, and becomes wholly

This bird is common in every part of this island, as well as in most parts of Europe; its usual haunts, during summer, are in woods and thickets, but in winter it approaches nearer to cultivated grounds, and feeds on seeds, winter berries, &c.; in the spring it frequents gardens, where it is usefully busy in destroying the worms which are lodged in the tender buds. The female makes her nest in bushes; it is composed chiefly of moss; she lays five or six eggs, of a dull bluish white, marked at the larger end with dark spots. In a wild state, its note is very simple; but when kept in a cage, its song, though low, is far from being unpleasant. Both male and female may be taught to whistle a variety of tunes, and, it is said, there are instances of two Bullfinches having been taught to sing in parts; a wonderful instance of docility! They are frequently imported into this country from Germany, where they are taught to articulate, with great distinctness, several words.

black during its confinement, especially when fed with hemp-seed. In the Leverian Museum there is a variety of the Bullfinch entirely white.*

* A white Bullfinch was shot in November, 1801, by Mr Robert Spearman, of Wharton. Its bill, like that of the common Bullfinch, was black, as were also a few of the first quills, the bastard wing, and a few slight spots about the eyes: all the other parts of the plumage were white, except being faintly blushed with red on the cheeks and breast.

OF THE BUNTING.

The principal difference between this kind and the last consists in the formation of the bill, which in the Bunting is of a very singular construction. The two mandibles are moveable, and the edges of each bend inwards; the opening of the mouth is not in a straight line as in other birds, but at the base the junction is formed by an obtuse angle in the lower mandible, nearly one-third of its length, which is received by a corresponding angle in the upper one; in the latter there is a strong knob, of great use in breaking the harder kinds of seeds and kernels, on which it feeds. The tongue is narrow, and tapers to a point like a tooth-pick; the first joint of the outer toe is joined to that of the middle one.

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THE BUNTING.

(Emberiza miliaria, Lin.—*Le Proyer*, Buff.)

The length of this bird is about seven inches and a half. The bill is brown; the irides hazel; the general colour resembles that of a Lark: the throat is white, the upper parts olive brown, each feather streaked down the middle with black; the under parts are of a dirty yellowish white, streaked on the sides with dark brown, and spotted with the same colour on the breast; the quills are dusky, with yellowish edges; upper coverts tipped with white; tail feathers much the same as the wings, and somewhat forked: the legs pale brown

This bird is very common in all parts of the country, and may be frequently observed on the highest part of a hedge, or uppermost branch of a tree, uttering its harsh and dissonant cry, which it incessantly repeats at short intervals; they are heard and seen in these situations during the greater part of summer, after which they are

met with in flocks, and continue so for the most part during winter: they are often shot in great numbers, or caught in nets; and from the similarity of their plumage, are not unfrequently sold for Larks. The female makes her nest among the thick grass, a little elevated above the ground; she lays five or six eggs, and while she is employed in the business of incubation, her mate brings her food, and entertains her with his frequently-repeated song. Buffon observes, that in France the Bunting is seldom seen during winter, but that it arrives soon after the Swallow, and spreads itself through almost every part of Europe. Their food consists chiefly of grain; they likewise eat the various kinds of insects which they find in the fields and meadows.

LIBRARY OF THE BOMBAY

THE YELLOW BUNTING.

YELLOW HAMMER, OR YELLOW YOWLEY.

(*Emberiza citrinella*, Lin.—*Le Bruant*, Buff.)

LENGTH somewhat above six inches. Bill dusky;

eyes hazel; its prevailing colour is yellow, mixed with browns of various shades; the crown of the head in general, is bright yellow, more or less variegated with brown; the cheeks, throat, and lower part of the beak are of a pure yellow; the breast reddish, and the sides dashed with streaks of the same colour; the hinder part of the neck and the back are of a greenish olive; the greater quills are dusky, edged with pale yellow; lesser quills and scapulars dark brown, edged with grey; the tail is dusky, and a little forked, the feathers edged with light brown, the outermost with white; the legs are of a yellowish brown. It is somewhat difficult to describe a species of bird of which no two are to be found perfectly similar, but its specific characters are plain, and cannot easily be mistaken. The colours of the female are less bright than those of the male, with very little yellow about the head.

This bird is common in every lane and on every hedge throughout the country, flitting before the traveller as he passes along the road, or uttering its simple and frequently repeated monotone on the hedges by the way-side. It feeds on various kinds of seeds, insects, &c. The female makes an artless nest, composed of hay, dried roots, and moss, which she lines with hair and wool; she lays four or five eggs, marked with dark irregular streaks, and frequently has more than one brood in the season. In Italy where small birds of almost every description are made use of for the table, this is esteemed very good eating, and is frequently fattened for that purpose like the Ortolan: but with us, who are accustomed to gross kinds of food, it is considered too insignificant to form any part of our repasts.

THE BLACK-HEADED BUNTING.

REED BUNTING, OR REED SPARROW.

(*Emberiza Schæniclus*, Lin.—*L'Ortolan de Roseaux*, Buff.)

This bird is less than the Yellow Bunting. Its eyes are hazel; the head, throat, fore part of the neck, and breast are black, excepting a white line from each corner of the bill, passing downward a little, and forming a border which reaches the back part of the neck; the upper parts of the body and the wings are of a reddish brown, with a streak of black down the middle of each feather; the under part of the body is white, with brownish streaks on the sides; the rump and upper tail coverts bluish ash colour, mixed with brown; the quills are dusky, edged with brown; the two middle feathers of the tail are black, with pale brown edges; the rest wholly black, except the two outer ones, which are almost white, the ends tipped with brown, and the bases black; the legs and feet dusky brown. The female has no collar; her throat is not so black, and her head is variegated

with black and rust colour; the white on her under parts is not so pure, but is of a reddish cast.

Birds of this species frequent fens and marshy places, where there are abundance of rushes, among which they nestle. The nest is composed of dry grass, and lined with the soft down of the reed; it is fixed with great art between four reed stalks, two on each side, almost close to each other, and about three feet above the water. The female lays four or five eggs, of a pale bluish white, veined irregularly with purple, principally at the larger end. As its chief resort is among reeds, it is supposed that the seeds of that plant are its principal food; it is however frequently seen in the higher grounds near the roads, and sometimes in corn fields. They keep near the ground, and seldom perch except among the low bushes. The male, during the time of hatching, has a soft, melodious, warbling song, whilst he sits perched among the reeds, and is frequently heard in the night time. It is a watchful, timorous bird, and is very easily alarmed; in a state of captivity it sings but little, and only when perfectly undisturbed.

Birds of this species are said to be migratory in France; with us they remain the whole year, and are seldom seen in flocks of more than three or four together. That from which the foregoing figure was taken, was caught during a severe storm in the middle of winter.

THE SNOW BUNTING.

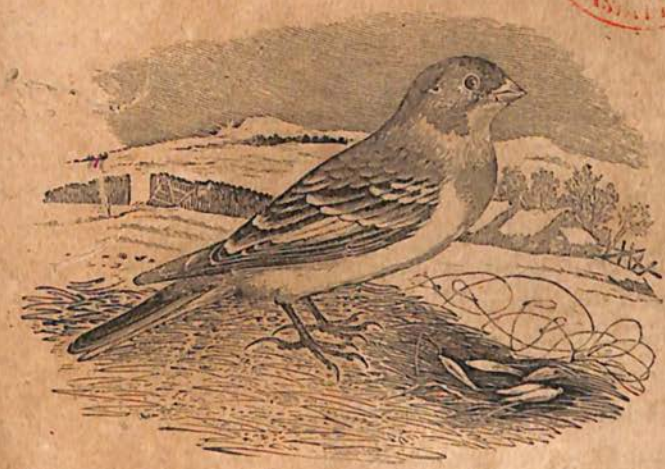
SNOWFLAKE.

(*Emberiza Nivalis*, Lin.—*L'Ortolan de Neige*, Buff.)

LENGTH nearly seven inches. Bill and eyes black; in winter the head, neck, coverts of the wings, rump, and all the under parts of the body are as white as snow, with a light tint of rusty colour on the hinder part of the head; the back is black; the bastard wings and ends of the greater coverts white; the prime quills are black, secondaries white, with a black spot on their inner webs; middle feathers of the tail black, the three outer ones white, with a dusky spot near the ends; legs black. Its summer dress is different, the head, neck, and under parts of the body are marked with transverse waves of a rusty colour, of various shades, but never so deep as in the female, in which this is the predominant colour; the white likewise upon the under parts of her body is less pure than that of the male.

The hoary mountains of Spitzbergen, the Lapland Alps, the shores of Hudson's Bay, and perhaps countries still more northerly, are, during the summer months, the favourite abodes of this hardy bird. The excessive severity of these inhospitable regions changes parts of its plumage into white in winter; and there is reason to believe that the further northward they are found, the whiter the plumage will be. It is chiefly met with in the northern parts of this island, where it is called the Snow-flake; it appears in great flocks in the snowy season, and is said to be the certain harbinger of severe weather, which drives it from its usual haunts. This bird has been caught in various parts of Yorkshire, and is frequently

met with in Northumberland; it is found in all the northern latitudes without exception, as far as our navigators have been able to penetrate. Great flocks have been seen upon the ice near the shores of Spitzbergen. They are known to breed in Greenland, where the female makes her nest in the fissures of the mountain rocks; the outside is composed of grass, within which is a layer of feathers, and the down of the arctic fox composes the lining of its comfortable little mansion: she lays five white eggs, spotted with brown. These birds do not perch, but continue always on the ground, and run about like Larks, to which they are similar in size, manners, and in the length of their hinder claws, whence they have been ranged with birds of that class by some authors, but are now with more propriety referred to the Buntings, from the peculiar structure of the bill. They are said to sing sweetly, sitting on the ground. On their first arrival in this country they are very lean; but soon grow fat, and are considered as delicious food. The Highlands of Scotland abound with them.



THE TAWNY BUNTING.

GREAT PIED MOUNTAIN FINCH, OR BRAMBLING.

THE length is somewhat above six inches. The bill is short, of a yellow colour, and blackish at the point; the crown of the head tawny; the forehead chesnut colour; the hinder part of the neck and the cheeks the same, but lighter; the throat, sides of the neck, and space round the eyes are of a dirty white; the breast dull yellow; the under parts white, in some tinged with yellow; the back and scapulars are black, edged with reddish brown; the quill feathers are dusky, edged with white; the secondaries are white on their outer edges; the greater coverts are tipped with white, which, when the wing is closed, forms a bed of that colour upon it; the upper tail coverts are yellow; the tail is a little forked, the two outermost feathers white, the third black, tipped with white, the rest wholly black; the legs are short and

black; the hinder claws are almost as long, but more bent than those of the Lark.

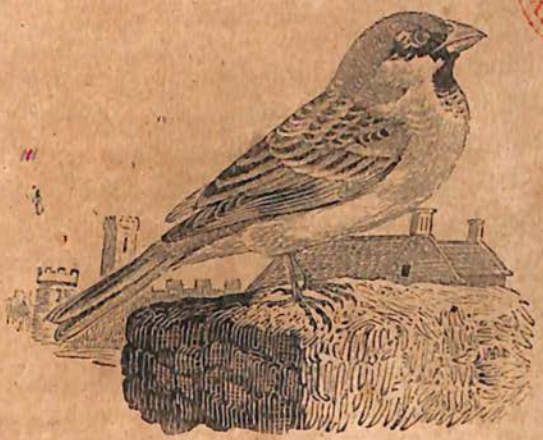
The foregoing figure and description of this bird were taken from one which was caught in the high moory grounds above Shotley-Kirk, in the county of Northumberland. We are perfectly of opinion, with Mr Pennant, that this and the former are the same bird in their summer and winter dress.* Linnæus, who must have been well acquainted with this species, comprises them under one, and says that they vary, not only according to the season, but to their age: it is certain that no birds of the same species differ from each other more than they; among multitudes that are frequently taken, scarcely two are alike. Mr Pennant supposes, with great probability, that the swarms which annually visit the northern parts of our island, arrive from Lapland and Iceland, and makes the isles of Ferro, Shetland and the Orkneys, their resting places during the passage. In the winter of 1778-9, they came in such multitudes into Birsa, one of the Orkney isles, as to cover the whole barony; yet of all the numbers, it could hardly be discovered that any two of them agreed perfectly in colours. It is probable that the Mountain Bunting, or Lesser Mountain Finch of Pennant and Latham is the same bird in a somewhat different dress: it has been sometimes found in the more southern parts of England, where the little stranger must have been noticed; and without duly attending to its distinguishing characters, it has been considered as forming a distinct kind, and adding one more to the numerous varieties of the feathered tribes. We have often had occasion to observe, how difficult it is to

* Vide Arctic Zoology, Number 222.

avoid falling into errors of this sort: the changes which frequently take place in the same bird, at different periods of its age, as well as from change of food, climate, or the like, are so considerable, as often to puzzle, and sometimes to mislead, the most experienced ornithologists; much caution is therefore necessary to guard against these deceitful appearances, lest by multiplying the species beyond the bounds which nature has prescribed, we introduce confusion into our system, and instead of satisfying the attentive inquirer, only bewilder and perplex him in his researches into nature.

OF THE FINCH.

The transition from the Bunting to the Finch is very easy, and the shade of difference between them, in some instances, almost imperceptible; on which account they have been frequently confounded with each other. The principal difference consists in the beak, which, in the Finch is conical, very thick at the base, and tapering to a sharp point: in this respect it more nearly resembles the Grosbeak. Of this tribe many are distinguished as well for the liveliness of their song, as for the beauty and variety of their plumage, on which accounts they are much esteemed. They are very numerous, and assemble sometimes in immense flocks, feeding on seeds and grain of various kinds, as well as on insects and their eggs.



THE HOUSE-SPARROW.

(Fringilla domestica, Lin.—*Le Moineau franc*, Buff.)

THE length of this bird is five inches and three quarters: the bill is dusky, eyes hazel; the top of the head and back part of the neck are of an ash colour; the throat, fore part of the neck, and space round the eyes, black; the cheeks are whitish; the breast and all the under parts are of a pale ash colour; the back, scapulars, and wing coverts are of a reddish brown, mixed with black—the latter are tipped with white, forming a light bar across the wing; the quills are dusky, with reddish edges; the tail is brown, edged with grey, and a little forked; the legs are pale brown. The female is distinguished from the male by wanting the black patch on the throat, and by having a little streak behind each eye; she is also much plainer and duller in her whole plumage.

This bird, as seen in large and smoaky towns, is generally sooty and unpleasing in its appearance; but among

barns and stack-yards the cock bird exhibits a very great variety in his plumage, and is far from being the least beautiful of our British birds.

The Sparrow is subject to great varieties of plumage: in the British and Leverian Museums there are several white ones, with yellow eyes and bills, others more or less mixed with brown, and some entirely black. A pair of white Sparrows were sent to the editors of this work, by Mr Raleigh Trevelyan, of St John's College, Cambridge.

In whatever country the Sparrow is settled, it is never found in desert places, or at a distance from the dwellings of man. It does not, like other birds, shelter itself in woods and forests, or seek its subsistence in uninhabited plains, but is a resident in towns and villages: it follows society, and lives at its expence: granaries, barns, court-yards, pigeon-houses, and in short all places where grain is scattered, are its favorite resorts. It is surely saying too much of this poor proscribed species, to sum up its character in the words of the Count de Buffon: "It is extremely destructive, its plumage is entirely useless, its flesh indifferent food, its notes grating to the ear, and its familiarity and petulance disgusting." But let us not condemn a whole species of animals, because, in some instances, we have found them troublesome or inconvenient. Of this we are sufficiently sensible; but the uses to which they are subservient, in the grand economical distribution of nature, we cannot so easily ascertain. We have already observed,* that, in the destruction of caterpillars, they are eminently serviceable to vegetation, and in this respect

* See Introduction.

alone, there is reason to suppose, sufficiently repay the destruction they may make in the produce of the garden or the field. The great table of nature is spread out alike to all, and is amply stored with every thing necessary for the support of the various families of the earth; it is owing to the superior intelligence and industry of man, that he is enabled to appropriate so large a portion of the best gifts of providence for his own subsistence and comfort; let him not then think it waste, that, in some instances, creatures inferior to him in rank, are permitted to partake with him, nor let him grudge their scanty pittance; but, considering them only as the tasters of his full meal, let him endeavour to imitate their chearfulness, and lift up his heart in grateful effusions to HIM "who filleth all things living with plenteousness."

The Sparrow never leaves us, but is familiar to the eye at all times, even in the most crowded and busy parts of a town: it builds its nest under the eaves of houses, in holes of walls, and often about churches. The nest is made of hay, carelessly put together, and lined with feathers. The female lays five or six eggs, of a reddish white colour, spotted with brown; she has generally three broods in the year, whence the multiplication of the species must be very great. In autumn large flocks of them are seen every where, both in town and country. Though familiar, the Sparrow is said to be a crafty bird, easily distinguishing the snares laid to entrap it; they often mix with other birds, and not unfrequently partake with the Pigeons or the poultry, in spite of every precaution to prevent them.

THE MOUNTAIN SPARROW.

(Fringilla Montana, Lin.—*Le Friquet*, Buff.)

This bird is somewhat less than the common Sparrow. The bill is black; eyes hazel; the crown of the head and hinder part of the neck are of a chesnut colour; sides of the head white; throat black; behind each eye there is a pretty large black spot; the upper parts of the body are of a rusty brown, spotted with black; the breast and under parts dirty white; the quills are black, with reddish edges, as are also the greater coverts; the lesser are bay, edged with black, and crossed with two white bars; the tail is of a reddish brown, and even at the end; the legs are pale yellow.

This species is frequent in Yorkshire, Lancashire, and also in Lincolnshire, but has not been seen further north than those counties: it differs from the House Sparrow in making its nest in trees and not in buildings. Buffon says that it feeds on fruits, seeds, and insects. It is a lively, active little bird, and, when it alights, has a variety of motions, whirling about and jerking its tail upwards and downwards, like the Wagtail. It is found in Italy, France, Germany, and Russia, and is much more plentiful in many parts of the continent than in England.

THE CHAFFINCH.

SHILFA, SCOBBY, SKELLY, OR SHELL-APPLE.

(*Fringilla cælebs*, Lin.—*Le Pinçon*, Buff.)

THE bill is of a pale blue, tipped with black; eyes hazel; the forehead black; the crown of the head, and the hinder part and sides of the neck are of a bluish ash colour; sides of the head, throat, fore part of the neck, and the breast are of a vinaceous red; belly, thighs, and vent white, slightly tinged with red; the back is of a reddish brown, changing to green on the rump; both greater and lesser coverts are tipped with white, forming two pretty large bars across the wing; the bastard wing and quill feathers are black, edged with yellow; the tail, which is a little forked, is black, the outermost feather edged with white; the legs are brown. The female wants the red upon the breast; her plumage in general is not so vivid, and inclines to green; in other respects it is not much unlike that of the male.

This beautiful little bird is every where well known; it begins its short and frequently-repeated song early in the spring, and continues it till about the summer solstice,

after which it is no more heard. It is a lively bird, which together with its elegant plumage, has given rise to the proverb, "*as gay as a Chaffinch.*" Its nest is very neat, and constructed with much art, of small fibres, roots, and moss, and lined with wool, hair, and feathers; the female lays generally five or six eggs, of a pale reddish colour, sprinkled with dark spots, principally at the larger end. The male is very assiduous in his attendance during the time of hatching, seldom straying far from the place, and then only to procure food. Chaffinches subsist chiefly on small seeds of various kinds; they likewise eat caterpillars and insects, with which they also feed their young. They are seldom kept in cages, as their song possesses no variety, and they are not very apt in learning the notes of other birds. The males frequently maintain obstinate combats, and fight till one of them is vanquished, and compelled to give way. In Sweden these birds perform a partial migration; the females collect in vast flocks in the latter end of September, and, leaving their mates, spread themselves through various parts of Europe: the males continue in Sweden, and are again joined by their females, who return in great numbers, about the beginning of April, to their wonted haunts. With us, both males and females remain the whole year. Mr White, in his history of Selborne, observes, that great flocks sometimes appear in that neighbourhood about Christmas, and that they are almost entirely hens. It is difficult to account for so singular a circumstance as the parting of the two sexes in this instance; perhaps the males, being more hardy and better able to endure the rigours of the northern winters, are content to remain in the country, and pick up such fare as they can find, whilst the females seek for subsistence in more temperate regions.

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THE MOUNTAIN FINCH.

BRAMBLING.

(*Fringilla Montifringilla*, Lin.—*Le Pinçon d'Ardennes*, Buff.)

LENGTH somewhat above six inches. Bill yellow, blackish at the tip; eyes hazel; the feathers on the head, neck, and back are black, edged with rusty brown; sides of the neck, just above the wings, blue ash; rump white; the throat, fore part of the neck, and the breast are of a pale orange; belly white; lesser wing coverts pale reddish brown, edged with white; greater coverts black, tipped with pale yellow; quills dusky, with pale yellowish edges; the tail is forked, the outermost feathers edged with white, the rest black, with whitish edges: legs pale brown.

The Mountain Finch is a native of northern climates, whence it spreads into various parts of Europe: it arrives in this country in the latter end of summer, and is the most common in the mountainous parts of our island.*

* We have seen them on the Cumberland hills in the middle of August.

Vast flocks of them sometimes come together; they fly very close, and on that account great numbers of them are frequently killed at one shot. In France they are said to appear sometimes in such immense numbers, that the ground where they have roosted has been covered with their dung for a considerable space; and in one year they were so numerous, that more than six hundred dozen were killed each night during the greater part of the winter.* They are said to build their nests in fir trees, at a considerable height; it is composed of long moss, and lined with hair, wool, and feathers; the female lays four or five eggs, white, spotted with yellow. The flesh of the Mountain Finch, though bitter, is said to be good to eat, and better than that of the Chaffinch; but its song is much inferior, and is only a disagreeable kind of chirping. It feeds on seeds of various kinds, and is said to be particularly fond of beech mast.

* Buffon.

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THE GOLDFINCH.

GOLDSPINK, OR THISTLE-FINCH.

(*Fringilla Carduelis*, Lin.—*Le Chardonneret*, Buff.)

THE bill is white, tipped with black; the forehead and chin are of a rich scarlet colour, which is divided by a black line passing from each corner of the bill to the eyes, which are dark; the cheeks are white; top of the head black, which colour extends downward from the nape on each side, dividing the white on the cheeks from the white spot on the hinder part of the neck; the back and rump are of a cinnamon brown colour; the sides the same, but paler; belly white; greater wing coverts black; quills black, marked in the middle of each feather with yellow, forming, when the wing is closed, a large patch of that colour upon it; the tips white; the tail feathers are black, with a white spot on each near the end; the legs are of a pale flesh colour.

Beauty of plumage, says the lively Count de Buffon, melody of song, sagacity, and docility of disposition, seem

all united in this charming little bird, which, were it rare, and imported from a foreign country, would be more highly valued. Goldfinches begin to sing early in the spring, and continue till the time of breeding is over; when kept in a cage, they will sing the greater part of the year. In a state of confinement they are much attached to their keepers, and will learn a variety of little tricks, such as to draw up small buckets containing their water and food, to fire a cracker, and such like. They construct a very neat and compact nest, which is composed of moss, dried grass, and roots, lined with wool, hair, the down of thistles, and other soft and delicate substances. The female lays five white eggs, marked with spots of a deep purple colour at the larger end. They feed their young with caterpillars and insects; the old birds feed on various kinds of seeds, particularly those of the thistle, of which they are extremely fond.

Goldfinches breed with the Canary; this intermixture succeeds best between the cock Goldfinch and the hen Canary, whose offspring are productive, and are said to resemble the male in the shape of the bill, and in the colours of the head and wings, and the hen in the rest of the body.

THE SISKIN.

ABERDEVINE.

(*Fringilla Spinus*, Lin.—*Le Tarin*, Buff.)

LENGTH nearly five inches. Bill white; eyes black; top of the head and throat black; over each eye there is a pale yellow streak; back of the neck and the back yellowish olive, faintly marked with dusky streaks down the middle of each feather; rump yellow; under parts greenish yellow, palest on the breast; thighs grey, marked with dusky streaks; greater wing coverts of a pale yellowish green, and tipped with black; quills dusky, faintly edged with yellow, the outer web of each at the base of a fine pale yellow, forming, when the wing is closed, an irregular bar of that colour across it; the tail is forked, the middle feathers black, with faint edges, the outer ones yellow, with black tips: the legs pale brown; claws white.

The foregoing figure and description were taken from one which was caught on the banks of the Tyne, and kept some years afterwards in a cage; its song, though

not so loud as that of the Canary, was pleasing and sweetly various; it imitated the notes of other birds, even to the chirping of the Sparrow: it was familiar, docile, and chearful, and began its song early in the morning. Like the Goldfinch, the Siskin may easily be taught to draw up its little bucket with water and food. The latter consists chiefly of seeds; it drinks frequently, and seems fond of throwing water over its feathers. It breeds freely with the Canary. When the Siskin is paired with the hen Canary, he is assiduous in his attention to his mate, carrying materials for the nest, and arranging them; and, during the time of incubation, regularly supplying the female with food.

These birds are common in various parts of Europe; they are in most places migratory, but do not seem to observe any regular periods, as they are sometimes seen in large, and at other times in very small numbers. Buffon observes that those immense flights happen only once in the course of three or four years. It conceals its nest with so much art, that it is extremely difficult to discover it. Kramer says, that in the forests bordering on the Danube, thousands of young Siskins are frequently found, which have not dropt their first feathers, and yet it is rare to meet with a nest. It is not known to breed in this island, nor is it said from whence they come over to us. In some parts of the South it is called the Barley-bird, being seen about that seed time; and in the neighbourhood of London it is known by the name of the Aberdevine.

THE CANARY FINCH

(*Fringilla Canaria*, Lin.—*Le Serin des Canaries*, Buff.)

Is somewhat larger than the last, being about five inches and a half in length. The bill is of a pale flesh colour; general colour of the plumage yellow, more or less mixed with grey, and in some with brown on the upper parts; the tail is somewhat forked; legs pale flesh colour.

In a wild state they are found chiefly in the Canary Islands, whence they have been brought to this country, and almost every part of Europe: they are kept in a state of captivity, and partake of all the differences attendant on that state. Buffon enumerates twenty-nine varieties, and many more might probably be added to the list, were all the changes incident to a state of domestication carefully noted and brought into the account. The breeding and rearing of these charming birds form an amusement of the most pleasing kind, and afford a variety of scenes highly interesting and gratifying to innocent minds. In the places fitted up and accommodated to the use of the little captives, we are delighted to see the workings of nature exemplified in the choice of their mates, building their nests, hatching and rearing their young, and in the impassioned ardour exhibited by the male, whether he is engaged in assisting his faithful mate in collecting materials for her nest, in arranging them for her accommodation, in providing food for her offspring, or in chaunting his lively and amorous songs during every part of the important business. The Canary will breed freely with the Siskin and Goldfinch, particularly the former, as has been already observed; it likewise proves

prolific with the Linnet, but not so readily; and admits also the Chaffinch, Yellow Bunting, and even the Sparrow, though with still more difficulty. In all these instances, excepting the first, the pairing succeeds best when the female Canary is introduced to the male of the opposite species. According to Buffon, the Siskin is the only bird of which the male and female propagate equally with those of the male or female Canaries.

The last-mentioned author, in his History of Birds, has given a curious account of the various methods used in rearing these birds, to which the reader is referred. We have thought it necessary to say so much of a bird, which, though neither of British origin, nor a voluntary visitor, must yet be considered as ours by adoption.*

* The importation of Canaries forms a small article of commerce; great numbers are every year imported from Tyrol: four Tyrolese usually bring over to England about sixteen hundred of these birds; and though they carry them on their backs one thousand miles, and pay twenty pounds for such a number, they are enabled to sell them at five shillings a-piece.—*Phil. Trans. vol. 62.*

THE LINNET.

GREY LINNET.

(*Fringilla Linaria*, Lin.—*La Linotte*, Buff.)

LENGTH about five inches and a half. The bill bluish grey; eyes hazel; the upper parts of the head, the neck, and back, are of a dark reddish brown, the edges of the feathers pale; the under parts are of a dirty reddish white; the breast is deeper than the rest, and in spring becomes of a very beautiful crimson; the sides are streaked with brown; the quills are dusky, edged with white; the tail brown, likewise with white edges, except the two middle feathers, which have reddish margins; it is somewhat forked: the legs are brown. The female wants the red on the breast, instead of which it is marked with streaks of brown; she has less white on her wings, and her colours in general are less bright.

This bird is very well known, being common in every part of Europe; it builds its nest in low bushes; the outside is made up of dry grass, roots, and moss; it is

lined with hair and wool. The female lays four or five eggs, of a pale blue colour, spotted with brown at the larger end: she breeds generally twice in the year. The song of the Linnet is lively and sweetly varied; its manners are gentle, and its disposition docile; it easily adopts the songs of other birds, when confined with them, and in some instances it has been taught to pronounce words with great distinctness; but this substitution of imperfect and forced accents, which have neither charms nor beauty, in the room of the free and varied modulations of uninstructed nature, is a perversion of its talents. Linnets are frequently found in flocks: during winter, they feed on various sorts of seeds, and are said to be particularly fond of lintseed, from which circumstance they derive their name.

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THE GREATER REDPOLE.

(*Fringilla Cannabina*, Lin.—*Le grande Linotte de Vignes*, Buff.)

This bird is somewhat less than the last, and differs principally from the Linnet in being marked on the forehead by a blood-coloured spot; the breast likewise is tinged with a fine rose colour; in other respects it resemble the Linnet so much, that Buffon supposes them to be the same, and that the red spots on the head and breast are equivocal marks, differing at different periods, and appearing at one time and disappearing at another, in the same bird. It is certain that during a state of captivity, the red marks disappear entirely; and that in the time of moulting, they are nearly obliterated, and for some time do not recover their usual lustre. But however plausible this may appear, it is not well founded. The Redpole is smaller than the Linnet; it makes its nest on the ground, while the latter builds in furze and thorn hedges: they differ likewise in the colour of their eggs, those of the Redpole being of a very pale green, with rusty-coloured spots. The head of the female is ash coloured, spotted with black, and of a dull yellow on the breast and sides, which are streaked with dusky lines.

Redpoles are common in the northern parts of England, where they breed chiefly in mountainous places.

THE LESSER REDPOLE.

(*Fringilla Linaria*, Lin.—*Le Sizerin*, Buff.)

Length about five inches. Bill pale brown, point dusky; eyes hazel; the forehead is marked with a pretty large spot, of a deep purplish red: the breast is of the same colour, but less bright; the feathers on the back are dusky, edged with pale brown; the greater and lesser coverts tipped with dirty white, forming two light bars across the wing; the belly and thighs are of a dull white; the quills and tail dusky, edged with dirty white; the latter somewhat forked: legs dusky. In our bird the rump was somewhat reddish, in which it agrees with the Twite of Mr Pennant, and most probably constitutes one species with it and the Mountain Linnet, the differences being immaterial, and merely such as might arise from age, food, or other accidental circumstances. The female has no red on the breast or rump, and the spot on her forehead is of a saffron colour; her plumage in general is not so bright as that of the male.

This species is found in every part of Europe, from Italy to the most extreme parts of the Russian empire. In America and the northern parts of Asia it is likewise very common. They are not unfrequent in this island; they breed chiefly in the northern parts, where they are known by the name of French Linnets. They make a shallow open nest, composed of dried grass and wool, and lined with hair and feathers: the female lays four eggs, almost white, marked with reddish spots. In the winter they mix with other birds, and migrate in flocks to the southern counties; they feed on small seeds of various kinds, especially those of the alder, of which they are extremely fond; they hang like the Titmouse, with their back downwards, upon the branches while feeding, and in this situation may easily be caught with lime twigs.

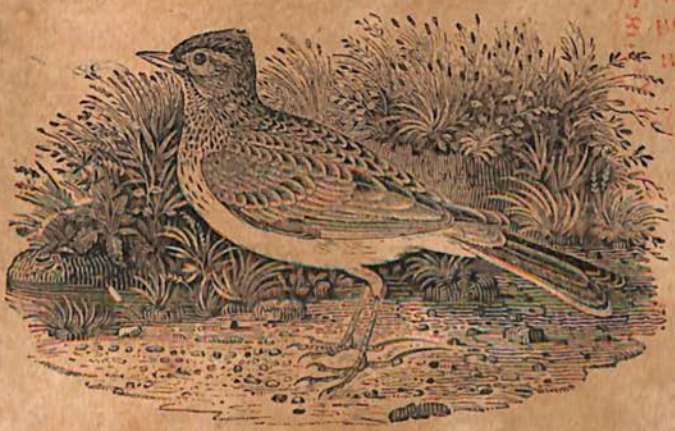
OF THE LARK.

Among the various kinds of singing birds with which this country abounds, there is none more eminently conspicuous than those of the Lark kind. Instead of retiring to woods and deep recesses, or lurking in thickets, where it may be heard without being seen, the Lark is seen abroad in the fields; it is the only bird which chaunts on the wing, and while it soars beyond the reach of our sight, pours forth the most melodious strains, which may be distinctly heard at an amazing distance. The great poet of nature thus beautifully describes it as the leader of the general chorus:

..... "Up springs the Lark,
"Shrill-voic'd and loud, the messenger of morn;
"Ere yet the shadows fly, he, mounted, sings
"Amid the dawning clouds, and from their haunts
"Calls up the tuneful nations."

From the peculiar construction of the hinder claws, which are very long and straight, Larks generally rest upon the ground; those which frequent trees perch only on the larger branches. They all build their nests upon the ground, which exposes them to the depredations of the smaller kinds of voracious animals, such as the weasel, stoat, &c. which destroy great numbers of them. The Cuckoo likewise, which makes no nest of its own, frequently substitutes its eggs in the place of theirs. The general characters of this species are thus described:- The bill is straight and slender, bending a little towar the end, which is sharp-pointed; the nostrils are covered

with feathers and bristles; the tongue is cloven at the end; tail somewhat forked; the toes divided to the origin; claw of the hinder toe very long, and almost straight; the fore claws very short, and slightly curved.



THE SKYLARK.

LAVROCK.

(*Alauda arvensis*, Lin.—*L'Alouette*, Buff.)

LENGTH nearly seven inches. Bill dusky, under mandible somewhat yellow; eyes hazel; over each eye there is a pale streak, which extends to the bill, and round the eye on the under side; on the upper parts of the body the feathers are of a reddish brown colour, dark in the middle, with pale edges; the fore part of the neck is of a reddish white, dashed with brown; breast, belly, and thighs white; the quills brown, with pale edges; tail the same, and somewhat forked, the two middle feathers darkest, the outermost white on the outer edge; the legs dusky. In some of our specimens the feathers on the

top of the head were long, and formed a sort of crest behind. The Lesser Crested Lark of Pennant and Latham is perhaps only a variety of this, the difference being trifling. It is said to be found in Yorkshire.

The Lark begins its song very early in the spring, and is heard chiefly in the morning; it rises in the air almost perpendicularly and by successive springs, and hovers at a vast height; its descent, on the contrary, is in an oblique direction, unless it is threatened by birds of prey, or attracted by its mate, and on these occasions it drops like a stone. It makes it nest on the ground, between two clods of earth, and lines it with dried grass and roots: the female lays four or five eggs, of a greyish brown colour, marked with darker spots; she generally has two broods in the year, and sits only about fifteen days. As soon as the young have escaped from the shell, the attachment of the parent bird seems to increase; she flutters over their heads, directs all their motions, and is ever ready to screen them from danger.

The Lark is diffused almost universally throughout Europe; it is every where extremely prolific, and in some places the prodigious numbers that are frequently caught are truly astonishing. In Germany there is an excise upon them, which has produced, according to Keysler, the sum of 6000 dollars in one year to the city of Leipsic alone. Mr Pennant says, the neighbourhood of Dunstable is famous for the great numbers of these birds found there, and that 4000 dozen have been taken between September and February, for the London markets. Yet, notwithstanding the great havoc made among these birds, they are extremely numerous. The winter is the best season for taking them, as they are

then very fat, being almost constantly on the ground, feeding in great flocks; whereas in summer they are very lean; they then always go in pairs, eat sparingly, and sing incessantly while on the wing.

THE FIELD LARK.

(*Alauda campestris*, Lin.—*La Spipolette*, Buff.)

This exceeds the Titlark in size, being about six inches long. Its bill is slender; the plumage on the head, neck, and back is of a dark greenish brown, streaked with black, palest on the rump; above each eye is a pale streak; quill feathers dusky brown, with pale edges; the scapulars faintly bordered with white; the throat and under parts of the body are of a dirty white; the breast is yellowish, and marked with large black spots; the sides and thighs streaked with black; the tail dusky, two outer feathers white, except a small part of the inner web; the next two tipped with white: the legs are of a yellowish brown; the hinder claws somewhat curved.

This bird is similar to the Titlark in plumage; its song is however totally different, as are also its haunts, which are chiefly near woods, and not unfrequently on trees; it builds it nest like the last, and in similar situations, on the ground, and sometimes in a low bush near the ground. The male is scarcely to be distinguished from the female in its outward appearance.

THE GRASSHOPPER LARK.

(Alauda trivialis, Lin.—*L'Alouette Pipi*, Buff.*)*.

This is the smallest of the Lark kind, and has, though we think not with sufficient reason, been ranked among the warblers. Its bill is slender and dusky; the upper parts of the body are of a greenish colour, variegated and mixed with brown; the under parts of a yellowish white, speckled irregularly on the breast and neck; the feathers of the wings and tail are of a palish dusky brown, with light edges: the legs pale dingy brown; its hinder claws, though shorter and more crooked than those of the Skylark, sufficiently mark its kind. It builds its nest on the ground, in solitary spots, and conceals it beneath a turf: the female lays five eggs, marked with brown near the larger end.

In the spring the cock bird sometimes perches on a tall branch, singing with much emotion: at intervals he rises to a considerable height, hovers a few seconds, and drops almost on the same spot, continuing to sing all the time; his tones are soft, clear, and melodious. In the winter its cry is said to resemble that of the grasshopper, though rather stronger and shriller: it has been called the Pipit Lark, from its small shrill cry, and in German *Picplerche* for the same reason. Mr. White observes, that its note seems close to a person, though at an hundred yards distance; and when close to the ear, seems scarcely louder than when a great way off. It skulks in hedges and thick bushes, and runs like a mouse through the bottom of the thorns, evading the sight. Sometimes, early in the morning,

when undisturbed, it sings on the top of a twig, gaping and shivering with its wings.

We have occasionally met with another bird of the Lark kind, which we have ventured to denominate the Tree Lark: it frequents woods, and sits on the highest branches of trees, whence it rises singing to a considerable height, and descends slowly, with its wings set up and its tail spread out like a fan. Its note is full, clear, melodious, and peculiar to its kind.

THE WOODLARK.

(*Alauda arborea*, Lin.—*L'Alouette de bois*, Buff.)

This bird is somewhat smaller than the Field Lark: the colours of its plumage are much the same, but on the upper parts are paler, and not so distinctly defined: a white streak passes from the bill over each eye towards the nape, nearly surrounding the head like a bandage;

the under parts are white, tinged with yellow on the throat, and red on the breast, and spotted with black. The tail is rather shorter than that of other Larks, which gives this bird a less tall and slender shape: the legs are of a dull yellow; the hinder claw very long, and somewhat curved.

The Woodlark is generally found near the borders of woods, from which it derives its name; it perches on trees, and sings during the night, so as sometimes to be mistaken for the Nightingale; it likewise sings as it flies, and builds its nest on the ground, similar to that of the Skylark. The female lays five eggs, of a dusky hue, marked with brown spots. It builds very early, the young, in some seasons, being able to fly about the latter end of March. It makes two nests in the year, like the Skylark, but is not nearly so numerous as that bird. In autumn the Woodlarks are fat, and are then esteemed excellent eating.

THE TITLARK.

(*Alauda pratensis*, Lin.—*La Farlouse, ou L'Alouette de prez*, Buff.)

This bird is less than the Woodlark, being not more than five inches and a half in length. Its bill is black at the tip, and of a yellowish brown at the base; its eyes are hazel, and over each is a pale streak. In the disposition of its colours it is very similar to the Skylark, but somewhat darker on the upper parts, and inclining to a greenish brown. The breast is beautifully spotted with black on a light yellowish ground; the belly light ash colour, obscurely streaked on the sides with dusky; the tail is almost black, the two outer feathers white on the exterior edges, the outermost but one tipped with a white spot on the end: the legs are yellowish; feet and claws brown. The female differs only in that its plumage is less bright than that of the male.

The Titlark is common in this country; and, though it sometimes perches on trees, is generally found in

meadows and low marshy grounds. It makes its nest on the ground, lining it with hair: the female lays five or six eggs, of a deep brown colour: the young are hatched about the beginning of June. During the time of incubation, the male sits on a neighbouring tree, rising at times and singing. The Titlark is flushed with the least noise, and shoots with a rapid flight. Its note is fine, but short, and without much variety; it warbles in the air like the Skylark, and increases its song as it descends slowly to the branch on which it chuses to perch. It is further distinguished by the shake of its tail, particularly whilst it eats.

OF THE WAGTAIL.

THE species of this kind are few, and these are chiefly confined to the continent of Europe, where the individuals are numerous. They are easily distinguished by their brisk and lively motions, as well as by the great length of their tails, which they jerk up and down incessantly, from which circumstance they derive their name.* They do not hop, but run along the ground very nimbly after flies and other insects, on which they feed: they likewise feed on small worms, in search of which they are frequently seen to flutter round the husbandman while at his plough, and follow the flocks in search of the flies which generally surround them. They frequent the sides of runners and pools, and pick up the insects which swarm on the surface. They seldom perch; their flight is weak and undulating, during which they make a twittering noise.

* In almost all languages the name of this bird is descriptive of its peculiar habits. In Latin, Motacilla; in French, Motteux, La Lavandiere, or Washer; in England, they are sometimes called Washers, from their peculiar motion; in German, their name signifies Brook-stilts; and in Italian, Shake-tail, &c. &c.

THE PIED WAGTAIL.

BLACK AND WHITE WATER WAGTAIL.

(*Motacilla Alba*, Lin.—*La Lavandiere*, Buff.)

The length of this bird is about seven inches. The bill is black; eyes hazel; hinder part of the head and neck black; the forehead, cheeks, and sides of the neck are white; the fore part of the neck and part of the breast are black, bordered by a line of white, in the form of a gorget; the back and rump are of a dark ash colour; wing coverts and secondary quills dusky, edged with light grey; prime quills black, with pale edges; lower part of the breast and belly white; the middle feathers of the tail are black, the outermost white, except at the base and tips of the inner webs, which are black: legs black. There are slight variations in these birds; some are white on the chin and throat, leaving only a crescent of black on the breast. The head of the female is brown.

This is a very common bird with us, and may be seen every where, running on the ground, and frequently leaping after flies and other insects, on which it feeds. Its usual haunts are the shallow margins of waters, into

which it will sometimes wade a little in search of its food. It makes it nest on the ground, of dry grass, moss, and small roots, lined with hair and feathers: the female lays five white eggs, spotted with brown. The parent birds are very attentive to their young, and continue to feed and train them for three or four weeks after they are able to fly: they will defend them with great courage when in danger, or endeavour to draw aside the enemy by various little arts. They are very attentive to the cleanliness of the nest, and will throw out the excrement; they have been known to remove light substances, such as paper or straw, which have been laid as a mark for the nest.

The Wagtail is said by some authors to migrate into other climates about the end of October; with us it is known to change its quarters as the winter approaches, from north to south. Its note is small and insignificant, but frequently repeated, especially while on the wing.

THE GREY WAGTAIL.

(*Motacilla Boarula*, Lin.—*La Bergeronette jaune*, Buff.)

This bird is somewhat larger than the last, owing to the great length of its tail. Its bill is dark brown; over each eye there is a pale streak; the head, neck, and back are of a greyish ash colour; the throat and chin are black; the rump and all the under parts of the body are of a bright yellow; wing coverts and quills dark brown, the former with pale edges; the secondaries, which are almost as long as the greater quills, are white at the base, and tipped with yellow on the outer edges; the middle feathers of the tail are black, the outer ones white: legs yellowish brown.

This elegant little bird frequents the same places as the last, and feeds on the same kind of food. It remains with us during winter, frequenting the neighbourhood of springs and running waters. The female builds her nest on the ground, and sometimes in the banks of rivulets; it is composed of nearly the same materials as that of the

last: she lays from six to eight eggs, of a dirty white, marked with yellow spots. She differs from the male in having no black on the throat.

THE YELLOW WAGTAIL.

(*Motacilla flava*, Lin.—*La Bergeronette de printems*, Buff.)

Length six inches and a half. Bill black; eyes hazel; the head and all the upper parts of the body are of an olive green, palest on the rump; the under parts are of a bright yellow, dashed with a few dull spots on the breast and belly; over each eye there is a pale yellow streak, and beneath a dusky line, curving upwards towards the hinder part of the head; wing coverts edged with pale yellow; quills dusky; tail black, except the outer feathers, which are white: legs black; hinder claws long.

This bird is seen very early in the spring, in the meadows and fields, among the green corn, where it frequently nestles; in winter it haunts the sides of brooks and springs which do not freeze. The female lays five eggs, of a pale lead colour, with dusky spots.

OF THE FLYCATCHERS.

Of the birds which constitute this class, we find only two kinds that inhabit this island, and these are not the most numerous of the various tribes with which this country abounds. The useful instincts and propensities of this little active race are chiefly confined to countries under the more immediate influence of the sun, where they are of infinite use in destroying those numerous swarms of noxious insects, engendered by heat and moisture, which are continually upon the wing. These, though weak and contemptible when individually considered, are formidable by their numbers, devouring the whole produce of vegetation, and carrying in their train the accumulated ills of pestilence and famine. Thus, to use the words of an eminent naturalist,* "we see, that all nature is balanced, and the circle of generation and destruction is perpetual! The philosopher contemplates with melancholy this seemingly cruel system, and strives in vain to reconcile it with his ideas of benevolence; but he is forcibly struck with the nice adjustment of the various parts, their mutual connection and subordination, and the unity of plan which pervades the whole."

The characters of this genus with us are somewhat equivocal, and not well ascertained; neither do we know of any common name in our language by which it is distinguished. Mr Pennant describes it thus:—"Bill flatted at the base, almost triangular, notched at the end of the upper mandible, and beset with bristles at its base." We have placed the Flycatcher here, as introductory to the numerous class which follows, to which it is nearly

* Buffon.

related, both in respect to form, habits, and modes of living; the affinity between them is so great, as to occasion some confusion in the arrangement of several of the individuals of each kind, for which reason we have placed them together.

THE PIED FLYCATCHER.

COLDFINCH.

(*Muscicapa Atricapilla*, Lin.—*Le Traquet d'Angleterre*, Buff.)

LENGTH nearly five inches. Bill black; eyes hazel; the forehead is white; the top of the head, the back, and tail are black; the rump is dashed with ash colour; the wing coverts are dusky, the greater coverts are tipped with white; the exterior sides of the secondary quills are white, as are also the outer feathers of the tail; all the under parts, from the bill to the tail, are white; the legs are black. The female is much smaller, but longer tailed than the male; she is brown where he is black; she likewise wants the white spot on the forehead.

This bird is no where common; it is said to be most

plentiful in Yorkshire, Lancashire, and Derbyshire. Since the cut was finished, which was done from a drawing presented to the Editors, we have been favoured with a pair of these birds, shot at Benton, in Northumberland: we suppose them to be male and female, as one of them wanted the white spot on the forehead; in other respects it was similar to the male: the upper parts in both were black, obscurely mixed with brown; the quill feathers dark reddish brown; tail dark brown, the exterior edge of the outer feather white: legs black.

The nest of this bird, with a very great number of young, was found in a hole of a tree, in Axwell Park, June 18, 1801:* the parent birds, but particularly the male, were extremely expert in catching the small flies with which they incessantly fed their young. The female, after she had fed her young, always jerked up her tail.

* The indefatigable and accurate Mr Montague, in the Supplement to his Ornithological Dictionary, doubts this information respecting the great number of young *said* to be found in the nest *in Axwell Park, in June*, 1801, as above described. *The Editor*, at this distant period of time, has forgot by whom this account was given; but *he* now also doubts the accuracy of the information as to the great number of young ones.

THE PIED FLYCATCHER.

THE figure here given, was taken from a bird shot in the middle of May, by the late Rev. Ralph Brocklebank, of Corbridge on Tyne, who says it is only to be seen in the spring and summer months. A distinct ridge runs along the upper mandible; and in plumage it agrees with the foregoing description of the birds sent from Benton.

THE SPOTTED FLYCATCHER.

BEAM BIRD.

(*Muscicapa Grisola*, Lin.—*Le Gobe-mouche*, Buff.)

LENGTH nearly five inches and three quarters. Bill dusky, the base of it whitish, and beset with short bristles; inside of the mouth yellow; the head and back light brown, obscurely spotted with black; the wings dusky, edged with white; the breast and belly white; the throat, and sides, under the wings, tinged with red; the tail dusky; legs black.

Mr White observes, that the Flycatcher, of all our summer birds, is the most mute and the most familiar. It visits this island in the spring, and disappears in September. It builds in a vine or sweetbriar, against the wall of a house, or on the end of a beam, and sometimes close to the post of a door where people are going in and out all day long: it returns to the same place year after year. The female lays four or five eggs, closely spotted and blotched with dark rusty red. The nest is carelessly made, and consists chiefly of moss, frequently mixed with wool and strong fibres, "so large," says Buffon, "that it appears surprising how so small an artificer could make use of such stubborn materials." This bird feeds on insects, which it catches on the wing; it sometimes watches for its prey, sitting on a branch or post, and with a sudden spring takes it as it flies, and immediately returns to its station to watch for more: it is likewise fond of cherries. Mr Latham says, it is known in Kent by the name the Cherry-sucker. It has no song, but only a sort of inward wailing note, when it perceives any danger to itself or young. It breeds only once, and retires early. When its young are able to fly, it retires with them to the woods, where it sports with them among the higher branches, sinking and rising often, perpendicularly, among the flies which hum below.

OF THE WARBLERS.

THIS very numerous class is composed of a great variety of kinds, differing in size from the Nightingale to the Wren, and not a little in their habits and manners. They are widely dispersed over most parts of the known world; some of them remain with us during the whole year; others are migratory, and visit us annually in great numbers, forming a very considerable portion of those numerous tribes of singing birds, with which this island so plentifully abounds. Some of them are distinguished by their flying, which they perform by jerks, and in an undulating manner; others by the whirring motion of their wings. The head in general is small; the bill is weak and slender, and beset with bristles at the base; the nostrils are small and somewhat depressed; and the outer toe is joined to the middle one by a small membrane.

THE NIGHTINGALE.

(*Motacilla luscinia*, Lin.—*Le Rossignol*, Buff.)

This bird, so deservedly esteemed for the excellence of its song, is not remarkable for the variety or richness of its colours. It is somewhat more than six inches in length. Its bill is brown, yellow on the edges at the base; eyes hazel; the whole upper part of the body is of a rusty brown, tinged with olive; the under parts pale ash colour, almost white at the throat and vent; the quills are brown, with reddish margins: legs pale brown. The male and female are very similar.

Although the Nightingale is common in this country, it never visits the northern parts of our island, and is but seldom seen in the western counties of Devonshire and Cornwall: it leaves us some time in the month of August, and makes its regular return in the beginning of April; it is supposed, during that interval, to visit the distant regions of Asia; this is probable, as these birds do not winter in any part of France, Germany, Italy,

Greece, &c. neither does it appear that they stay in Africa, but are seen at all times in India, Persia, China, and Japan; in the latter country they are much esteemed for their song, and sell at great prices. They are spread generally throughout Europe, even as far north as Siberia and Sweden, where they are said to sing delightfully; they, however, are partial to particular places, and avoid others which seem as likely to afford them the necessary means of support. It is not improbable, however, that, by planting a colony in a well-chosen situation, these delightful songsters might be induced to haunt places where they are not at present seen; the experiment might be easily tried, and should it succeed, the reward would be great in the rich and varied song of this unrivalled bird. The following animated description of it is taken from the ingenious author of the *Histoire des Oiseaux*:—"The leader of the vernal chorus begins with a low and timid voice, and he prepares for the hymn to nature by assaying his powers and attuning his organs; by degrees the sound opens and swells, it bursts with loud and vivid flashes, it flows with smooth volubility, it faints and murmurs, it shakes with rapid and violent articulations; the soft breathings of love and joy are poured from his inmost soul, and every heart beats in unison, and melts with delicious langour. But this continued richness might satiate the ear. The strains are at times relieved by pauses, which bestow dignity and elevation. The mild silence of evening heightens the general effect, and not a rival interrupts the solemn scene."

Nightingales begin to build about the end of April or the beginning of May; they make their nest in the lower part of a thick bush or hedge; the female lays four

or five eggs, of a greenish brown colour. The nest is composed of dry grass and leaves, intermixed with small fibres, and lined with hair, down, and other soft and warm substances. The business of incubation is entirely performed by the female, whilst the cock, at no great distance, entertains her with his delightful melody: as soon, however, as the young are hatched, he leaves off singing, and joins her in the care of providing for the young brood. These birds make a second hatch, and sometimes a third; and in hot countries they are said to have four.

The Nightingale is a solitary bird, and never unites in flocks like many of the smaller birds, but hides itself in the thickest parts of the bushes, and sings generally in the night: its food consists principally of insects, small worms, eggs of ants, and sometimes berries of various kinds. Nightingales, though timorous and shy, are easily caught; snares of all sorts are laid for them, and generally succeed; they are likewise caught on lime twigs. Young ones are sometimes brought up from the nest, and fed with great care till they are able to sing. It is with great difficulty that old birds are induced to sing after being taken; for a considerable time they refuse to eat, but by great attention to their treatment, and avoiding every thing that might agitate them, they at length resume their song, and continue it during the greater part of the year.

THE DARTFORD WARBLER.

(Le Pitchou de Provence, Buff.)

This bird measures above five inches in length, of which the tail is about one half. Its bill is rather long and slender, and a little bent at the tip; it is of a black colour, whitish at the base; its eyes are reddish; eye-lids deep crimson; all the upper parts are of a dark rusty brown, tinged with dull yellow; the breast, part of the belly, and thighs are of a deep red, inclining to rust colour; the middle of the belly is white; the bastard wing is also white; the tail is dusky, except the exterior web of the outer feather, which is white: the legs are yellow.

It seems to be a rare bird in this country, and owes its name, with us, to the accident of a pair of them having been seen near Dartford in Kent, a few years ago; they have since been observed in great numbers, and are supposed sometimes to winter with us. Buffon says they are natives of Provence, where they frequent gardens,

and feed on flies and small insects. The foregoing representation was taken from a stuffed specimen in the Wycliffe Museum, now in the possession of Geo. Allan, Esq. of the Grange, near Darlington.

THE REDBREAST.

ROBIN-REDBREAST, OR RUDDOCK.

(*Motacilla rubecola*, Lin.—*Le Rouge Gorge*, Buff.)

This general favourite is too well known to need a very minute description. Its bill is slender and delicate; its eyes are large, black, and expressive, and its aspect mild; its head and all the upper parts of its body are brown, tinged with a greenish olive; its neck and breast are of a fine deep reddish orange; a spot of the same colour marks its forehead; its belly and vent are of a dull white: its legs are dusky.

During the summer the Redbreast is rarely to be seen; it retires to woods and thickets, where, with its mate, it prepares for the accommodation of its future family. Its nest is placed near the ground, by the roots of trees, in

the most concealed spot, and sometimes in old buildings; it is constructed of moss, intermixed with hair and dried leaves, and lined with feathers: in order more effectually to conceal it, the bird covers its nest with leaves, leaving only a narrow winding entrance under the heap. The female lays from five to nine eggs, of a dull white, marked with reddish spots. During the time of incubation, the cock sits at no great distance, and makes the woods resound with his delightful warble; he keenly chases all the birds of his own species, and drives them from his little settlement; for it has never been known that two pairs of these birds, who are as faithful as they are amorous, were lodged at the same time in the same bush.* The Redbreast prefers the thick shade, where there is water; it feeds on insects and worms; but never eats them alive. It takes them in its bill and beats them against the ground till they cease to move: during this operation it frequently happens that the caterpillar is burst, and its entrails are shaken out, leaving only the body thus cleansed from all its impurities. Some ornithologists have ascribed this to the extreme delicacy of the bird in preparing its repast; others think that it is only an accidental consequence arising from the manner of putting its prey to death.

Although the Redbreast never quits this island, it performs a partial migration. As soon as the business of incubation is over, and the young are sufficiently grown to provide for themselves, he leaves his retirement, and again draws near the habitations of mankind: his well-known familiarity has attracted the attention and secured the protection of man in all ages; he haunts the dwelling

* Unum arbustum non alit duos erithacos.

of the cottager, and partakes of his humble fare; when the cold grows severe, and snow covers the ground, he approaches the house, taps at the window with his bill, as if to entreat an asylum, which is always chearfully granted, and with a simplicity the most delightful, hops round the house, picks up crumbs, and seems to make himself one of the family. Thomson has very beautifully described the annual visits of this little guest, in the following lines:—

" The Redbreast, sacred to the household gods,
" Wisely regardful of th' embroiling sky,
" In joyless fields and thorny thickets leaves
" His shivering mates, and pays to trusted man
" His annual visit. Half afraid, he first
" Against the window beats; then brisk alights
" On the warm hearth; then, hopping o'er the floor
" Eyes all the smiling family askance,
" And pecks, and starts, and wonders where he is;
" Till, more familiar grown, the table crumbs
" Attract his slender feet."

The young Redbreast, when full feathered, may be taken for a different bird, being spotted all over with rust-coloured spots on a light ground: the first appearance of the red is about the end of August, but it does not attain its full colour till the end of the following month. Redbreasts are never seen in flocks, but always singly; and, when all other birds associate together, they still retain their solitary habits. Buffon says, that as soon as the young birds have attained their full plumage, they prepare for their departure; but in thus changing their situation, they do not gather in flocks, but perform their journey singly, one after another, which is a singular circumstance in the history of this

bird. Its general familiarity has occasioned it to be distinguished by a peculiar name in many countries: about Bornholm, it is called Tomi Liden; in Norway, Peter Ronsmad; in Germany, it is called Thomas Gierdet; and with us, Robin-Redbreast, or Ruddock.

THE REDSTART.

RED-TAIL.

(*Motacilla Phœnicurus*, Lin.—*Le Rossignol de muraille*, Buff.)

This bird measures rather more than five inches in length. Its bill and eyes are black; its forehead is white; cheeks, throat, fore part and sides of the neck black, which colour extends over each eye; the crown of the head, hinder part of the neck, and the back are of a deep blue grey; in some subjects, probably old ones, this grey is almost black; its breast, rump, and sides are of a fine glowing red, inclining to orange colour, which extends to all the feathers of the tail, excepting the two middle ones, which are brown; the belly is white; feet and claws black. The female differs considerably from

the male; her colours are not so vivid: the top of the head and back are of a grey ash colour, and the chin is white.

The Redstart is migratory; it appears about the middle of April, and departs in the latter end of September, or beginning of October; it frequents old walls and ruinous edifices, where it makes its nest, composed chiefly of moss, lined with hair and feathers. It is distinguished by a peculiar quick shake of its tail from side to side, on its alighting on a wall or other place. Though a wild and timorous bird, it is frequently found in the midst of cities, always chusing the most difficult and inaccessible places for its residence: it likewise builds in forests, in holes of trees, or in high and dangerous precipices. The female lays four or five eggs, not much unlike those of the Hedge-sparrow, but somewhat longer. These birds feed on flies, spiders, the eggs of ants, small berries, soft fruits, and such like.

THE FAUVETTE.

PETTICHAPS.

(*Motacilla hippolais*, Lin.—*La Fauvette*, Buff.)

LENGTH about six inches. Its bill is blackish; eyes dark hazel; the whole upper part of the body is of a dark brown, or mouse colour, lightly tinged with pale brown on the edges of the wing coverts, and along the webs of the secondary quills; the larger quills are of a dusky ash colour, as are also those of the tail, excepting the outermost, which are white on the exterior sides and tips; over each eye there is a pale streak; the throat and belly are of a silvery white: legs dark brown.

This bird frequents thickets, and is seldom to be seen out of covert; it secretes itself in the thickest parts of the bushes, where it may be heard but not seen. It is truly a mocking bird, imitating the notes of various kinds, generally beginning with those of the Swallow, and ending with the full song of the Blackbird. We have often watched with the utmost attention whilst it was singing delightfully in the midst of a bush close at hand, but have seldom been able to obtain a sight of it, and could never procure more than one specimen. Its appearance with us does not seem to be regular, as we have frequently been disappointed in not finding it in its usual haunts. We suppose this to be the same with the Fauvette of M. Buffon,* which he places at the head of

* We have adopted the name of *Fauvette* for want of a more appropriate term in our language. We apprehend this to be the *Flycatcher* of Mr Pennant—*Br. Zool. vol.* 2, *p.* 264, 1*st. ed.*—and the *Lesser Petticaps* of Latham, which he says, is known in Yorkshire by the

a numerous family, consisting of ten distinct species, many of which visit this island in the spring, and leave it again in autumn. "These pretty warblers," says he, "arrive when the trees put forth their leaves, and begin to expand their blossoms; they are dispersed through the whole extent of our plains: some inhabit our gardens, others prefer the clumps and avenues; some conceal themselves among the reeds, and many retire to the midst of the woods." But, notwithstanding their numbers, this genus is confessedly the most obscure and indetermined in the whole of ornithology. We have taken much pains to gain a competent knowledge of the various kinds which visit our island, and have procured specimens of most, if not all of them, but confess that we have been much puzzled in reconciling their provincial names with the synonima of the different authors who have noticed them.

name of the Beambird; but he does not speak from his own knowledge of the Bird. It certainly is but little known, and has no common name in this country.

THE LESSER FAUVETTE.

PASSERINE WARBLER.

(*Motacilla passerina*, Lin.—*Le Passerinette*, Buff.)

LENGTH nearly the same as the last. Bill pale brown; upper parts of the body brown, slightly tinged with olive green; under parts dingy white, a little inclining to brown across the breast; quills dusky, with pale edges; tail dusky; over each eye there is an indistinct whitish line: legs pale brown. The male and female are much alike. The eggs are of a dull white, irregularly marked with dusky and black spots. This bird is also a mocker, but its song is not so powerful as that of the last.

THE WINTER FAUVETTE.

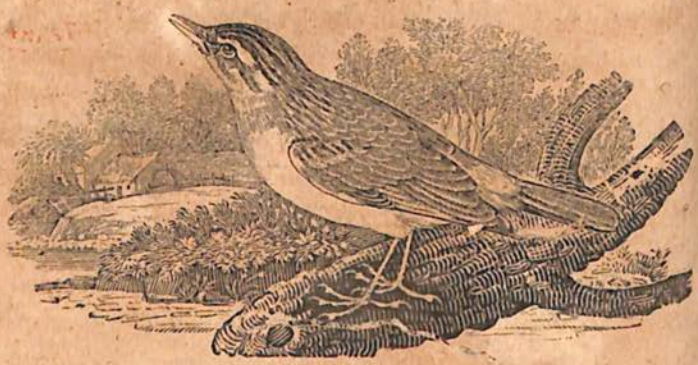
HEDGE WARBLER, HEDGE SPARROW, OR DUNNOCK.

(*Motacilla Modularis*, Lin.—*La Fauvette d'Hiver*, Buff.)

THE length of this well-known bird is somewhat more than five inches. Its bill is dark; eyes hazel; its general appearance is that of a dusky brown; the feathers of the head, hinder part of the neck, back, wings, and tail are edged with rusty or pale tawny brown, plain on the rump, rather clouded on the breast, and dashed on the sides with deeper shades of those colours: the chin, throat, sides of the neck, and fore part of the breast are of a dull bluish ash; the belly is of the same colour, but lighter, and the legs are reddish brown.

This bird is frequently seen in hedges, from which circumstance it derives one of its names; but it has no other relation to the Sparrow than in the dinginess of its colours; in every other respect it differs entirely. It remains with us the whole year, and builds its nest near the ground; it is composed of moss and wool, and lined

with hair. The female generally lays four or five eggs, of a uniform pale blue, without any spots: the young are hatched about the beginning of May. During the time of sitting, if a cat or other voracious animal should happen to come near the nest, the mother endeavours to divert it from the spot by a stratagem similar to that by which the Partridge misleads the dog: she springs up, flutters from spot to spot, and by such means allures her enemy to a safe distance. In France the Hedge-sparrow is rarely seen but in winter: it arrives generally in October, and departs in the spring for more northern regions, where it breeds. It is supposed to brave the rigours of winter in Sweden, and that it assumes the white plumage common in those severe climates in that season. Its song is little varied, but pleasant, especially in a season when all the other warblers are silent: its usual strain is a sort of quivering, frequently repeating something like the following *tit-tit-titititit*, from which, in some places, it is called the Titling. It has already been observed that the Cuckoo frequently deposits her egg in the nest of this bird.



THE REED FAUVETTE.

SEDGE BIRD.

(*Motacilla Salicaria*, Lin.—*La Fauvette de roseaux*, Buff.)

This elegant little bird is about the size of the Black-cap. Its bill is dusky; eyes hazel; the crown of the head and back are brown, marked with dusky streaks; the rump tawny; the cheeks are brown; over each eye there is a light streak; the wing coverts are dusky, edged with pale brown, as are also the quills and tail; the throat, breast, and belly are white, the latter tinged with yellow; the thighs are yellow: legs dusky; the hinder claws are long and much bent.

This bird is found in places where reeds and sedges grow, and builds its nest there, which is made of dried grass, and tender fibres of plants, lined with hair, and usually contains five eggs, of a dirty white, mottled with brown; it likewise frequents the sides of rivers and ponds, where there is covert: it sings incessantly night and day, during the breeding time, imitating by turns the notes of the Sparrow, the Swallow, the Skylark, and other birds, from which it is called the English Mock-bird.

Buffon observes, that the young ones, though tender and not yet fledged, will desert the nest if it be touched, or even if a person go too near it. This disposition, which is common to all the Fauvettes, as well as to this which breeds in watery places, seems to characterise the instinctive wildness of the whole genus.

THE BLACK-CAP.

(*Motacilla Atricapilla*, Lin.—*La Fauvette à tête noire*, Buff.)

This bird is somewhat above five inches in length. The upper mandible is of a dark horn colour; the under one light blue, and the edges of both whitish: top of the head black; sides of the head and back of the neck ash colour; back and wings of an olive grey; the throat and breast are of a silvery grey; belly and vent white: the legs are of a bluish colour, inclining to brown; the claws black. The head of the female is of a dull rust colour.

The Black-cap visits us about the middle of April, and retires in September; it frequents gardens, and builds its nest near the ground; it is composed of dried grass, moss, and wool, and lined with hair and feathers. The female lays five eggs, of a pale reddish brown, sprinkled

with spots of a darker colour. During the time of incubation the male attends the female, and sits by turns; he likewise procures her food, such as flies, worms, and insects. The Black-cap sings sweetly, and so like the Nightingale, that in Norfolk it is called the Mock-Nightingale. Buffon says that its airs are light and easy, and consist of a succession of modulations of small compass, but sweet, flexible, and blended. And our ingenious countryman, Mr White, observes, that it has usually a full, sweet, deep, loud, and wild pipe, yet the strain is of short continuance, and its motions desultory; but when this bird sits calmly, and in earnest engages in song, it pours forth very sweet but inward melody, and expresses great variety of sweet and gentle modulations, superior, perhaps, to any of our warblers, the Nightingale excepted; and, while it warbles, its throat is wonderfully distended. Black-caps feed chiefly on flies and insects, and not unfrequently on ivy and other berries.

THE WHITE-THROAT.

MUGGY.

(*Motacilla Sylva*, Lin.—*La Fauvette grise*, Buff.)

The length of this bird is about five inches and a half. Its bill is dark brown, lighter at the base; eyes dark hazel; the upper part of the head and back are of a reddish ash colour; throat white; lesser wing coverts pale brown; the greater dusky brown, with reddish margins; breast and belly silvery white; the wings and tail are dusky brown with pale edges, the outer feathers white: the legs pale brown. The breast and belly of the female are entirely white.

This bird arrives with the Redstart, Black-cap, &c. in the spring, and quits us in autumn about the same time as they; it frequents thickets and hedges, and feeds on insects and wild berries. It makes its nest in thick bushes, of fine dried grass, thinly lined with hair: the female lays five eggs, of a greenish white, sprinkled with darkish olive spots, which become numerous and blotched at the thicker end. It is often heard in the midst of a

thick covert to utter a pretty constant grating call of *cha, cha, cha,* which it leaves off as soon as it is disturbed, flitting before the passenger from bush to bush, singing as it flies along, and sometimes mounting up a little height into the air, as if it were attempting to imitate the Lark, both in its motions and song; but in these it falls greatly short, and its frequently repeated notes have but little melody.

THE YELLOW WILLOW WREN.

(*Motacilla trochilus,* Lin.—*Le Pouillot, ou le Chantre,* Buff.)

Length above five inches. The bill is brown, the inside and edges yellow; eyes hazel; the upper parts of the plumage are yellow, inclining to a pale olive green; the under pale yellow; over each eye there is a whitish streak, which in young birds is very distinct; the wings and tail are of a dusky brown, with pale edges: legs yellowish brown.

There are three distinct species* of the Willow Wren, of which this is the largest; the following two differ in their size as well as note; their form and manners are however very similar. This species is rather scarce here. It is sometimes seen on the tops of trees, whence it often

* The Editors were so fortunate as to procure specimens of each kind, taken at the same time of the year, and had an opportunity of noticing the difference of their song. For these specimens, as well as for many others, this work is indebted to the late Lieut. H. F. Gibson, of the 4th dragoons.

A nest, of this species, with five young ones, was found and examined in Axwell Park, June 18, 1801: it was built in a hole on the edge of a *brae*: the entrance was long, and curiously arched over with the stems of dried grass.

rises singing; its note is rather low, and soft, but not much varied. It makes its nest in holes, at the roots of trees or in dry banks, of moss, lined with wool and hair: the eggs are of a dull white, marked with reddish spots.

THE WILLOW WREN.

(Le Figuier brun et jaune, Buff.)

This is next in size. The plumage of the upper parts is much darker than that of the last, and of a greenish olive colour; the wings are brown, with pale yellowish edges; the under parts are whitish, pretty deeply tinged with yellow on the throat, breast, and thighs: the bill is brown, inside yellowish; over each eye a light yellow line extends from the bill to the back part of the head: the legs are yellowish brown. These birds vary much in the depth of the shadings of their plumage.

The Willow Wren frequents hedges, shrubberies, and such like places; its food consists of insects, in search of which it is continually running up and down small branches of trees. It makes an artless nest, of withered

grass, moss, and the slender stems of dried plants; it is lined with a few feathers, hair, and a little wool, and is commonly placed in a low thick bush or hedge: the female generally lays five eggs, which are white, spotted with red. We suppose this to be the *Figuier brun et jaune* of M. Buffon.

We are favoured by the ingenious Mr J. Gough, of Kendal, with the description of a bird very similar to this, which is common in Westmoreland, where it is known by the name of the Strawsmeer. It appears in the vallies in April, a few days after the Swallow, and begins to sing immediately on its arrival, and may be heard till the beginning of August.

THE LEAST WILLOW WREN.

CHIFF CHAFF.

This bird is about an inch less in length than the Yellow Willow Wren, and about half an inch shorter than the last. The upper parts of its plumage are darker than those of the last two, somewhat inclining to a mouse colour; its breast is of a dull silvery white, from which, in some places, it is called the Linty-white: its legs are dark.

The song of this bird, though similar to that of the last, is still weaker: in both it consists of a single strain, frequently repeated; and their little simple song, when poured forth from the branches of the loftiest trees, is heightened in tone only by the aid it receives from the echo.

This species visits this country among the first summer birds of passage, but from the smallness of its numbers they are thinly dispersed; from which, together with their preferring the shades of solitary woods and coverts, they are but rarely to be seen.

THE GOLDEN-CRESTED WREN.

(*Motacilla regulus*, Lin.—*Le Roitelet*, Buff.)

THIS is supposed to be the least of all the European birds; it is certainly the smallest of the British kinds, being in length not quite three inches and a half,* and weighing only seventy-six grains. Its bill is very slender and dark; eyes hazel; on the top of its head the feathers are of a bright orange colour, bordered on each side with black, which form an arch above its eyes, and with which it sometimes conceals the crown, by contracting the muscles of the head; the upper part of the body is of a yellowish olive green colour; all the under parts are of a pale reddish white, tinged with green on the sides; the greater coverts of the wings are of a dusky brown, edged with yellow, and tipped with white: quills dusky, edged with pale green, as are also the feathers of the tail, but lighter: the legs are of a yellowish brown. The female

* The body, when stripped of its feathers, is not quite an inch long.—*Buff.*

is distinguished by a pale yellow crown: her whole plumage is less vivid than that of the male.

This curious little bird delights in the largest trees, such as oaks, elms, tall pines, and firs, particularly the first, in which it finds both food and shelter; in these it builds its nest, which is suspended from a branch by a kind of cordage made of the materials of which the nest is chiefly composed; it is of an oblong form, having an aperture on one side, and is made principally of moss, lined with the softest down, mixed with slender filaments; the female lays six or seven eggs, scarcely larger than peas, which are white, sprinkled with very small spots of a dull colour. These birds are very agile, and are almost continually in motion, fluttering from branch to branch, creeping on all sides of the trees, clinging to them in every situation, and often hanging like the Titmouse. Their food consists chiefly of the smallest insects, which they find in the crevices of the bark of trees, or catch nimbly on the wing; they also eat the eggs of insects, small worms, and various sorts of seeds.

The Golden-crested Wren is diffused throughout Europe; it has also been met with in various parts of Asia and America, and seems to bear every change of temperature, from the greatest degree of heat to that of the severest cold. It stays with us the whole year; but Mr Pennant observes, that it crosses annually from the Orknies to the Shetland Isles, where it breeds and returns before winter—a long flight (of sixty miles) for so small a bird. Its song is said to be very melodious, but weaker than that of the Common Wren: it has besides a sharp shrill cry, somewhat like that of the Grasshopper.

THE WREN.

KITTY WREN.

(*Motacilla troglodytes*, Lin.—*Le Troglodyte*, Buff.)

LENGTH three inches and a half. The bill is slender, and a little curved; upper mandible and tips of a brownish horn colour, the under one, and edges of both, dull yellow; a whitish line extends from the bill over the eye, which are dark hazel; the upper parts of its plumage are of a clear brown, obscurely marked on the back and rump with narrow double wavy lines of pale and dark brown colours; the belly, sides, and thighs are marked with the same colours, but more distinctly; the throat is of a dingy white; the cheeks and breast the same, faintly dappled with brown; the quills and tail are marked with alternate bars of a reddish brown and black: the legs are of a pale olive brown.

This active little bird is very common in England, and braves our severest winters, which it contributes to enliven by its sprightly note. During that season, it

approaches near the dwellings of man, and takes shelter in the roofs of houses and barns, in hay-stacks, and holes in the walls: it continues its song till late in the evening, and not unfrequently during a fall of snow. In the spring it betakes itself to the woods, where it builds its nest near the ground, in a low bush, and sometimes on the turf, beneath the trunk of a tree, or in a hole in a wall: its nest is constructed with much art, being of an oval shape, with one small aperture in the side for an entrance: it is composed chiefly of moss, and lined within with feathers: the female lays from ten to sixteen, and sometimes eighteen eggs; they are white, thinly sprinkled with small faint reddish spots at the thicker end.

THE WHITE-RUMP.

WHEATEAR.

(*Motacilla oenanthe*, Lin.—*Le Motteux, ou le Cul blanc*, Buff.)

LENGTH five inches and a half. The bill is black; eyes hazel; from the base of the bill a black streak is extended over the eyes, cheeks, and ears, where it is

pretty broad; above this there is a line of white; the top of the head, hinder part of the neck, and the back, are of a bluish grey; the wing coverts and quills are dusky, edged with rusty white; the rump is perfectly white, as is also part of the tail; the rest is black; the under parts are of a pale buff colour, tinged with red on the breast: legs and feet black. In the female the white line above the eye is somewhat obscure, and all the black parts of the plumage incline more to brown; neither is the tail of so pure a white.

The White-rump breeds under shelter of a tuft or clod in newly-ploughed lands, or under stones, and sometimes in old rabbit burrows: its nest, which is constructed with great care, is composed of dry grass or moss, mixed with wool, and is lined with feathers; it is defended by a sort of covert fixed to the stone or clod under which it is formed: the female generally lays five or six eggs, of a light blue, the larger end encompassed with a circle of a somewhat deeper hue.

This bird visit us about the middle of March, and from that time till some time in May is seen to arrive: it frequents new-tilled grounds, and never fails to follow the plough in search of insects and small worms, which are its principal food. In some parts of England great numbers are taken in snares made of horse hair, placed beneath a turf; near two thousand dozen are said to be taken annually in that way, in one district only, which are generally sold at sixpence per dozen.* Great numbers are sent to the London markets, where they are much esteemed, being thought not inferior to the Ortolan. They leave us in August and September, and about

* Pennant.

that time are seen in great numbers by the sea-shore, where, probably, they subsist some little time before they take their departure. They are extended over a large portion of the globe, even as far as the southern parts of Asia.

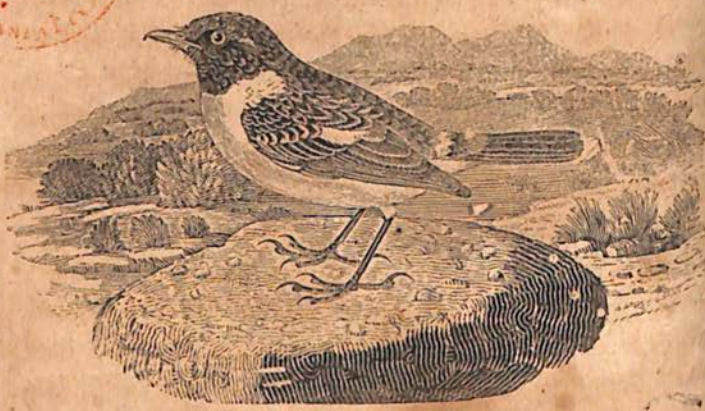
THE WHINCHAT.

(*Motacilla rubetra*, Lin.—*Le grand Traquet, ou le Tarier*, Buff.)

This bird is somewhat larger than the Stonechat. Its bill is black; eyes hazel; the feathers on the head, neck, and back are black, edged with rust colour; a streak of white passes from the bill over each eye towards the hinder part of the head; the cheeks are blackish; chin white; the breast is of a rust colour; belly, vent, and thighs pale buff; each wing is crossed by a white mark near the shoulder, and another smaller near the bastard wing; part of the tail, at the base, is white, the rest black; the two middle feathers are wholly black, as are

also the legs. The colours in general of the female are paler; the white streak over the eye, and the spots on the wings, are much less conspicuous; and the cheeks, instead of being black, partake of the colours of the head.

The Whinchat is a solitary bird, frequenting heaths and moors: it has no song, but only a simple unvaried note, and in manners very much resembles the Stonechat: it makes it nest very similar to that bird, and is generally seen in the same places during the summer months: the female lays five eggs, of a lightish blue, very faintly sprinkled with small rusty spots. In the northern parts of England it disappears in winter; but its migration is only partial, as it is seen in some of the southern counties at that season. It feeds on worms, flies, and insects. About the end of summer it is very fat, and at that time is said to be scarcely inferior in delicacy to the Ortolan.



THE STONECHAT.

STONE-SMITH, MOOR-TITLING.

(*Motacilla rubecola*, Lin.—*Le Traquet*, Buff.)

LENGTH nearly five inches. The bill is black; eyes dark hazel; the head, neck, and throat are black, faintly mixed with brown; on each side of the neck, immediately above the wings, there is a large white spot; the back and wing coverts are of a fine velvet black, margined with reddish brown; the quills are dusky, with pale brown edges, those next the body are white at the bottom, forming a spot of that colour on the wings; the breast is of a bay colour, lightest on the belly; the rump white; the tail is black, the outer feathers margined with rust colour: the legs are black. The colours of the female are duller; the white on the sides of the neck is not so conspicuous; the breast and belly are much paler, and the white spot on the rump is wanting.

This solitary little bird is chiefly to be found on wild heaths and commons, where it feeds on small worms and insects of all kinds. It builds its nest at the roots of

bushes, or underneath stones: it carefully conceals the entrance to it by a variety of little arts: it generally alights at some distance from it, and makes its approaches with great circumspection, creeping along the ground in a winding direction, so that it is a difficult matter to discover its retreat. The female breeds about the end of March, and lays five or six eggs of a greenish pale blue. The flight of the Stonechat is low: it is almost continually on the wing, flying from bush to bush, alighting only for a few seconds. It remains with us the whole year, and in winter is known to frequent moist places, in quest of food. Buffon compares its note to the word *wistrata* frequently repeated. Mr Latham observes, that it seemed to him like the clicking of two stones together, from which circumstance it probably may have derived its name.

OF THE TITMOUSE.

This diminutive tribe is distinguished by a peculiar degree of sprightliness and vivacity, to which may be added a degree of strength and courage which by no means agrees with its appearance. Birds of this class are perpetually in motion; they run with great celerity along the branches of trees, searching for their food in every little cranny, where the eggs of insects are deposited, which are their favourite food. During spring they are frequently observed to be very busy among the opening buds, searching for caterpillars, and are thus actively employed in preventing the mischiefs that would arise from a too great increase of those destructive insects, whilst, at the same time they are intent on the means of their own preservation: they likewise eat small pieces of raw meat, particularly fat, of which they are very fond. None of this kind have been observed to migrate: they sometimes make short flittings from place to place in quest of food, but never entirely leave us. They are very bold and daring, and will attack birds much larger than themselves with great intrepidity. Buffon says, "they pursue the Owl with great fury, and that in their attacks they aim chiefly at the eyes: their actions on these occasions are attended with a swell of the feathers, and a succession of violent attitudes and rapid movements, which strongly mark the bitterness of their rage. They will sometimes attack birds smaller and weaker than themselves, which they kill, and having picked a hole in the skull, they eat out the brains." The nests of most of this kind are constructed with the most exquisi-

art, and with materials of the utmost delicacy: some species, with great sagacity, build them at the extreme end of small branches projecting over water, by which means they are effectually secured from the attacks of serpents and the smaller beasts of prey.

These birds are very widely spread over every part of the old continent, from the northern parts of Europe to the Cape of Good Hope, as well as to the farthest parts of India, China, and Japan: they are likewise found throughout the vast continent of America, and in several of the West India islands. They are every where prolific, even to a proverb, laying a great number of eggs, which they attend with great solicitude, and provide for their numerous progeny with indefatigable activity.

All the Titmice are distinguished by short bills, which are conical, a little flattened at the sides, and very sharp-pointed; the nostrils are small and round, and are generally covered by short bristly feathers, reflected from the forehead; the tongue seems as if cut off at the end, and terminated by short filaments; the toes are divided to their origin; the back toe is very large and strong.

THE GREATER TITMOUSE.

OX-EYE.

(*Parus major*, Lin.—*La Grosse Mesange*, Buff.)

The length of this bird is about five inches. The bill is black, as are also the eyes; the head is covered apparently with a sort of hood, of a fine deep glossy black, which is extended to the middle of the neck; the cheeks are white; the belly is of a greenish yellow, divided down the middle by a line of black reaching to the vent; the back is of an olive green; rump blue grey; the quills are dusky, the greater edged with white, the lesser with pale green; the wing coverts are of a bluish ash colour; the greater coverts are tipped with white, which forms a bar across the wing; the tail is black, the exterior edge of the outer feathers is white: the legs are of a dark lead colour; claws black.

The Titmouse begins to pair early in February; the male and female consort for some time before they make their nest, which is composed of the softest and most downy materials; they build it generally in the hole of a tree: the female lays from eight to ten eggs, which are white, spotted with rust colour. Buffon says, that the

young brood continue blind for several days, after which their growth is very rapid, and they are able to fly in about fifteen days: after they have quitted the nest they return no more to it, but perch on the neighbouring trees, and incessantly call on each other; they generally continue together till the approach of spring invites them to pair. We kept one of these birds in a cage for some time; it was fed chiefly with hemp-seed, which, instead of breaking with its bill, like the Linnet, it held very dexterously in its claws, and pecked it till it broke the outside shell; it likewise eat raw flesh, minced small, and was extremely fond of flies, which when held to the cage, it would seize with great avidity: it was continually in motion during the day, and would, for hours together, dart backwards and forwards with astonishing activity. Its usual note was strong and simple; it had, besides, a more varied, but very low, and not unpleasant song. During the night it rested on the bottom of the cage.

THE BLUE TITMOUSE.

TOM-TIT, BLUE-CAP, OR NUN.

(*Parus cæruleus*, Lin.—*La Mesange bleue*, Buff.)

THE length of this beautiful little bird is about four inches and a half. The bill and eyes are black; crown of the head blue, terminated behind with a line of dirty white; sides of the head white, underneath which, from the throat to the hinder part of the neck, there is a line of dark blue; from the bill, on each side, a narrow line of black passes through the eyes; the back is of a yellowish green; coverts blue, edged with white; quills black, with pale blue edges; the tail is blue, the two middle feathers longest; the under parts of the body pale yellow: legs and claws black. The female is somewhat smaller than the male, has less blue on the head, and her colours in general are not so bright.

This busy little bird is seen frequently in our gardens and orchards, where its operations are much dreaded by the over-anxious gardener, who fears, that in its pursuit

after its favourite food, which is often lodged in the tender buds, it may destroy them also, to the injury of the future harvest, not considering that it is the means of destroying a much more dangerous enemy (the caterpillar) which it finds there: it has likewise a strong propensity to flesh, and is said to pick the bones of such small birds as it can master, as clean as skeletons. The female builds her nest in holes of walls or trees, which she lines well with feathers: she lays from fourteen to twenty white eggs, spotted with red. If her eggs should be touched by any person, or one of them be broken, she immediately forsakes her nest and builds again, but otherwise makes but one hatch in the year. This bird is distinguished above all the rest of the Titmice by its rancour against the Owl.

THE COLE TITMOUSE.

(*Parus ater*, Lin.—*La petite Charbonniere*, Buff.)

This bird is somewhat less than the last, and weighs only two drachms; its length is four inches. The bill is

black, as are also the head, throat, and part of the breast; from the corner of the bill, on each side, an irregular patch of white passes under the eyes, extending to the sides of the neck; a spot of the same colour occupies the hinder part of the head and neck; the back and all the upper parts are of a greenish ash colour; the wing coverts are tipped with white, which forms two bars across the wing; the under parts are of a reddish white: legs lead colour; tail somewhat forked at the end.

THE LONG-TAILED TITMOUSE.

(*Parus caudatus*, Lin.—*La Mesange a longue queue*, Buff.)

The length of this bird is nearly five inches and a half, of which the tail itself is rather more than three inches. Its bill is very short and black; eyes hazel, the orbits red; the top of the head is white, mixed with grey: over each eye there is a broad black band, which extends backwards, and unites on the hinder part of the head, whence it passes down the back to the rump, bordered on each side with dull red; the cheeks, throat, and breast are white; the belly, sides, rump, and vent are of a dull rose colour, mixed with white; the coverts of the wings are black, those next the body white, edged

with rose colour; the quills are dusky, with pale edges: the tail consists of feathers of very unequal lengths; the four middle feathers are wholly black, the others are white on the exterior edge: legs and claws black.

The foregoing figure was taken from one newly shot. There was a stuffed specimen in the museum of the late Mr Tunstall, at Wycliffe, in which the black band through the eyes was wholly wanting; the back of the neck was black; the back, sides, and thighs were of a reddish brown, mixed with white: it probably was a female.

The nest of this bird is singularly curious and elegant, being of a long oval form, with a small hole in the side, near the top, as an entrance; its outside is formed of moss woven or matted together with the silken shrouds of the aurelia of insects, and covered all over with the tree and the stone lichens, fixed with fine threads of the same silken material: from this thatch the rain trickles off without penetrating it, whilst from its similarity in colour and appearance to the bark of the branch on which it is most commonly placed, it is not easily to be discovered: the inside is thickly lined with a profusion of feathers,* the soft webs of which are all laid inwards, with the quills or points stuck into the outward fabric. In this comfortable little mansion the female deposits her eggs, to the number of sixteen or seventeen, which are concealed almost entirely among the feathers: they are about the size of a large pea, and perfectly white,† but take a fine red blush from the transparency of the shell, which shews the yolk. This bird is not uncommon with

* In some places the nest is called a feather-poke.

† Eggs taken out of the same nest differ: some are delicately freckled with red spots.

us; it frequents the same places as the other species of Titmice, feeds in the same manner, and is charged with the same misdemeanor in destroying the buds, and probably with the same reason. It flies very swiftly, and from its slender shape, and the great length of its tail, it seems like a dart shooting through the air. It is almost constantly in motion, running up and down the branches of trees with great facility. The young continue with the parents, and form little flocks through the winter: they utter a small shrill cry, only as a call, but in the spring their notes become more musical.

The Long-tailed Titmouse is found in the northern regions of Europe, and from the thickness of its coat, seems well calculated to bear the rigours of a severe climate. Mr Latham says, that it has likewise been brought from Jamaica; and observes, that it appeared as fully cloathed as in the coldest regions.

THE MARSH TITMOUSE.

BLACK-CAPPED TITMOUSE.

(*Parus palustris*, Lin.—*La Mesange de marais*, Buff.)

Its length is somewhat short of five inches. Its bill is black; the whole crown of the head, and part of the

neck behind, are of a deep black; a broad streak, of a yellowish white, passes from the beak, underneath the eye, backwards; the throat is black; the breast, belly, and sides are of a dirty white; the back is ash-coloured; quill feathers dusky, with pale edges: the tail is dusky; legs dark lead colour.

The Marsh Titmouse is said to be fond of wasps, bees, and other insects: it lays up a little store of seeds against a season of want. It frequents marshy places, whence it derives its name. Its manners are similar to those of the Cole Titmouse, and it is equally prolific.

THE BEARDED TITMOUSE.

(*Parus biarmicus*, Lin.—*La Mesange barbue*, Buff.)

Length somewhat more than six inches. The bill is of an orange colour, but so delicate that it changes on the death of the bird to a dingy yellow; the eyes are also orange; the head and back part of the neck are of a pearl grey, or light ash colour; on each side of the head,

from the eye, there is a black mark extending downwards on the neck, and ending in a point, not unlike a mustachio; the throat and fore part of the neck are of a silvery white; the back, rump, and tail are of a light rust colour, as are also the belly, sides, and thighs; the breast is of a delicate flesh colour; the vent black; the lesser coverts of the wings are dusky, the greater rust colour, with pale edges; the quills are dusky, edged with white, those next the body with rusty on the exterior web, and with white on the inner; the bastard wing is dusky, edged and tipped with white: the legs are black. The female wants the black mark on each side of the head; the crown of the head is rust colour, spotted with black; the vent feathers are not black, but of the same colour as the belly.

The Bearded Titmouse is found chiefly in the southern parts of the kingdom; it frequents marshy places where reeds grow, on the seeds of which it feeds: it is supposed to breed there, though its history is imperfectly known. It is said that they were first brought to this country from Denmark by the Countess of Albemarle, and that some of them, having made their escape, founded a colony here; but Mr Latham, with great probability, supposes that they are ours *ab origine*, and that it is owing to their frequenting the places where reeds grow, and which are not easily accessible, that so little is known of them. Mr Edwards gives a figure of this bird, and describes it under the name of the Least Butcher Bird.

OF THE SWALLOW.

Of all the various families of birds, which resort to this island for food and shelter, there is none which has occasioned so many conjectures respecting is appearance and departure as the Swallow tribe: of this we have already hazarded our opinion in the introductory part of the work, to which we refer the reader. The habits and modes of living of this tribe are perhaps more conspicuous than those of any other. From the time of their arrival to that of their departure they seem continually before our eyes. The Swallow lives habitually in the air, and performs its various functions in that element; and whether it pursues its fluttering prey, and follows the devious windings of the insects on which it feeds, or endeavours to escape the birds of prey by the quickness of its motion, it describes lines so mutable, so varied, so interwoven, and so confused, that they hardly can be pictured by words. "The Swallow tribe is of all others the most inoffensive, harmless, entertaining and social; all, except one species, attach themselves to our houses, amuse us with their migrations, songs, and marvellous agility, and clear the air of gnats and other troublesome insects, which would otherwise much annoy and incommode us. Whoever contemplates the myriads of insects that sport in the sun-beams of a summer evening in this country, will soon be convinced to what degree our atmosphere would be choaked with them, were it not for the friendly interposition of the Swallow tribe."*

Not many attempts have been made to preserve Swallows alive during the winter, and of these, few have

* White's Selborne.

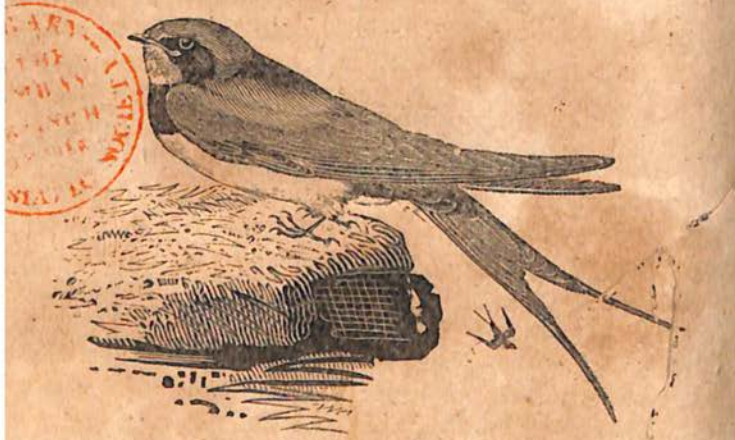
succeeded. The following experiments, by Mr James Pearson, of London, communicated to us by Sir John Trevelyan, Bart. are highly interesting, and throw great light upon the natural history of the Swallow; we shall give them nearly in Mr Pearson's own words.

Five or six of these birds were taken about the latter end of August, 1784, in a bat fowling-net, at night; they were put separately into small cages, and fed with Nightingale's food: in about a week or ten days they took food of themselves; they were then put altogether into a deep cage, four feet long, with gravel at the bottom; a broad shallow pan with water was placed in it, in which they sometimes washed themselves, and seemed much strengthened by it. One day Mr Pearson observed that they went into the water with unusual eagerness, hurrying in and out again repeatedly, with such swiftness as if they had been suddenly seized with a frenzy. Being anxious to see the result, he left them to themselves about half an hour, and on going to the cage again, found them all huddled together in a corner, apparently dead; the cage was then placed at a proper distance from the fire, when only two of them recovered, and were as healthy as before—the rest died. The two remaining ones were allowed to wash themselves occasionally for a short time only; but their feet soon after became swelled and inflamed, which Mr P. attributed to their perching, and they died about Christmas: thus the first year's experiment was in some measure lost. Not discouraged by the failure of this, Mr P. determined to make a second trial the succeeding year, from a strong desire of being convinced of the truth respecting their going into a state of torpidity. Accordingly, the next

season, having taken some more birds, he put them into the cage, and in every respect pursued the same methods as with the last; but to guard their feet from the bad effects of the damp and cold, he covered the perches with flannel, and had the pleasure to observe that the birds throve extremely well; they sung their song through the winter, and soon after Christmas began to moult, which they got through without any difficulty, and lived three or four years, regularly moulting every year at the usual time. On the renewal of their feathers it appeared that their tails were forked exactly the same as in those birds which return hither in the spring, and in every respect their appearance was the same. These birds, says Mr Pearson, were exhibited to the society for promoting Natural History, on the 14th day of February, 1786, at the time they were in a deep moult, during a severe frost, when the snow was on the ground. Minutes of this circumstance were entered in the books of the society. These birds died at last from neglect, during a long illness which Mr Pearson had: they died in the summer. Mr P. concludes his very interesting account in these words:—"January 20, 1797, I have now in my house, No. 21, Great Newport-street, Long-Acre, four Swallows in moult, in as perfect health as any birds ever appeared to be when moulting."

The result of these experiments pretty clearly proves, that Swallows do not in any material instance differ from other birds in their nature and propensities; but that they leave us, like many other birds, when this country can no longer furnish them with a supply of their proper and natural food, and that consequently they seek it in other places, where they meet with that support which enables them to throw off their feathers.

Swallows are found in every country of the known world, but seldom remain the whole year in the same climate; the times of their appearance and departure in this country are well known: they are the constant harbingers of spring, and on their arrival all nature assumes a more chearful aspect. The bill of this genus is short, very broad on the base, and a little bent; the head is flat, and the neck scarcely visible; the tongue is short, broad, and cloven; tail mostly forked; wings long; legs short.



THE CHIMNEY SWALLOW.

HOUSE SWALLOW.

(Hirundo rustica, Lin.—*L'Hirondelle domestique*, Buff.)

LENGTH somewhat more than six inches. Its bill is black; eyes hazel; the forehead and chin are red, inclining to chesnut; the whole upper part of the body is black, reflected with a purplish blue on the top of the head and scapulars; the quills of the wings, according to their different positions, are sometimes of a bluish black, and sometimes of a greenish brown, whilst those of the

tail are black, with green reflections; the fore part of the breast is black, and the rest of the breast and belly white; the inside and corners of the mouth are yellow; the tail is much forked, each feather, except the middle ones, is marked with an oval white spot on the inner web: the legs are very short, delicately fine, and blackish.

The Common Swallow makes its appearance with us soon after the vernal equinox, and leaves us again about the end of September: it builds its nest generally in chimnies, in the inside, within a few feet of the top, or under the eaves of houses: it is curiously constructed, of a cylindrical shape, plaistered with mud, mixed with straw and hair, and lined with feathers: it is attached to the sides or corners of the chimney, and is sometimes a foot in height, open at the top. The female lays five or six eggs, white, speckled with red. Swallows return to the same haunts: they build annually a new nest, and often fix it, if the place admit, above that occupied the preceding year. We are favoured by Sir John Trevelyan, Bart. with the following curious fact:—At Camerton Hall, near Bath, a pair of Swallows built their nest on the upper part of the frame of an old picture over the chimney, coming through a broken pane in the window of the room. They came three years successively, and in all probability would have continued to do so if the room had not been put into repair, which prevented their access to it. Both this bird and the Martin have generally two broods in the year; the first in June, the other in August, or perhaps later. We have seen a young Swallow, which was shot on the 26th of September; its length was scarcely five inches; its tail was short, and not forked; the feathers were black, but wanted the white

spots; its breast was tinged with red. Swallows frequently roost at night, after they begin to congregate by the sides of rivers and pools of water, from which circumstance it has been supposed that they retire into that element.

Swallows soon become familiar* after they have been caught; that from which the foregoing figure was taken

* The following remarkable proof of this property, is extracted from a letter written to the Editor, by the Rev. Walter Trevelyan, dated Long-Witton, Northumberland, September 10, 1800:—

"About nine weeks ago, a Swallow fell down one of our chimnies, nearly fledged, and was able to fly in two or three days. The children desired they might try to rear him, (to which I agreed, fearing the old ones would desert him) and as he was not the least shy, they succeeded without any difficulty, for he opened his mouth for flies as fast as they could supply them, and was regularly fed to a whistle. In a few days (perhaps a week) they used to take him into the fields with them, and as each child found a fly, and whistled, the little bird flew for his prey, from one to another: at other times he would fly round above them in the air, but always descended at the first call, in spite of the constant endeavours of the wild Swallows to seduce him away, for which purpose several of them at once would fly about him in all directions, striving to drive him away when they saw him about to settle on one of the children's hands, extended with the food. He would very often alight on the children, uncalled, when they were walking several fields distant from home.

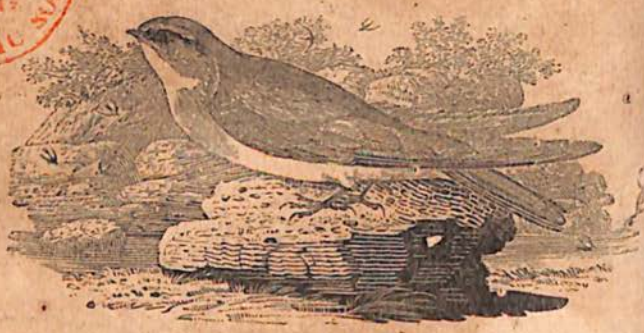
"Our little inmate was never made a prisoner, by being put into a cage, but always ranged about the room at large, wherever the children were, and they never went out of doors without taking him with them. Sometimes he would sit on their hands or heads, and catch flies for himself, which he soon did with great dexterity. At length, finding it took up too much of their time to supply him with food enough to satisfy his appetite, (for I have no doubt he ate from seven hundred to a thousand flies a-day) they used to turn him out of the house, shutting the window to prevent his return, for two or three hours together, in hopes he would learn to cater for himself, which he soon did, but still was no less tame, always answering their call, and coming in at the window to them (of

had been slightly wounded in the wing, so as to prevent its flying away. It sat on the bench while the cut was engraved, and from its having been fed by the hand with flies, when sitting for its portrait, watched every motion, and at every look of the eye, when pointedly directed towards it, ran close up to the graver, in expectation of a fresh supply of food.

his own accord) frequently, every day, and always roosting in their room, which he has regularly done from the first till within a week or ten days past. He constantly roosted on one of the children's heads till their bed-time; nor was he disturbed by the child moving about, or even walking, but would remain perfectly quiet, with his head under his wing, till he was put away for the night in some warm corner: for he liked much warmth.

"It is now four days since he came in to roost in the house, and though he did not then shew any symptoms of shyness, yet he is evidently becoming less tame, as the whistle will not now bring him to the hand, nor does he visit us as formerly, but he always acknowledges it when within hearing, by a chirp, and by flying near. Nothing could exceed his tameness for about six weeks, and I have no doubt it would have continued the same, had we not left him to himself as much as we could, fearing he would be so perfectly domesticated that he would be left behind at the time of migration, and of course be starved in the winter, from cold or hunger.

"One thing I have observed, which perhaps is not much known, which is, that these birds *cast* like the Hawk tribe."



THE SAND MARTIN.

BANK MARTIN, OR SAND SWALLOW.

(Hirundo riparia, Lin.—*L'Hirondelle de rivage*, Buff.)

LENGTH about four inches and three quarters. The bill is of a dark horn colour; the head, neck, breast, and back are of a mouse colour; over each eye there is a light streak; the throat and fore part of the neck are white, as are also the belly and vent; the wings and tail are brown: the feet are smooth and dark brown.

This is the smallest of all our Swallows, as well as the least numerous of them. It frequents the steep sandy banks in the neighbourhood of rivers, in the sides of which it makes deep holes, and places the nest at the end; it is carelessly constructed of straw, dry grass, and feathers: the female lays five or six white eggs, almost transparent, and is said to have only one brood in the year.

THE MARTIN.

MARTLET, MARTINET, OR WINDOW SWALLOW.

(*Hirundo urbicâ*, Lin.—*L'Hirondelle à cul blanc*, Buff.)

Length about five inches and a half. The bill is black; eyes dark hazel; inside of the mouth yellow; the top of the head, the wings, and tail are of a dusky brown; the back is black, glossed with blue; the rump and all the under parts of the body, from the chin to the vent, are of a pure white: the ends of the secondary quill feathers are finely edged with white; the legs are covered with white downy feathers down to the claws, which are white also, and are very sharp and much hooked; the middle toe is much longer than the others, and is connected with the inner one as far as the first joint.

This bird visits us in great numbers: it has generally two broods, sometimes three, in the year: it builds its nest most frequently upon the crags of precipices near the sea, or by the sides of lakes, and not unfrequently under the eaves of houses, or close by the sides of the windows: it is made of mud and straw on the outside, and lined with feathers: the first hatch the female lays five eggs, which are white, inclining so dusky at the larger end: the second time she lays three or four; and

the third (when that takes place) she only lays two or three. During the time the young birds are confined to the nest, the old one feeds them, adhering by the claws to the outside; but as soon as they are able to fly, they receive their nourishment on the wing, by a motion quick and almost imperceptible to those who are not accustomed to observe it.

The Martin arrives somewhat later than the Swallow, and does not leave us so soon: they have been observed in the neighbourhood of London as late as the middle of October. Mr White, in his Natural History of Selborne, has made some very judicious remarks on these birds, with a view to illustrate the time and manner of their annual migrations. The following quotation is very apposite, and serves to confirm the idea that the greater part of them quit this island in search of warmer climates. "As the summer declines, the congregating flocks increase in numbers daily, by the constant accession of the second broods, till at last they swarm in myriads round the villages on the Thames, darkening the face of the sky as they frequent the islets of that river, where they roost. They retire in vast flocks together, about the beginning of October." He adds, "that they appeared of late years in considerable numbers, in the neighbourhood of Selborne, for one day or two, as late as November the 3d and 6th, after they were supposed to have been gone for more than a fortnight." He concludes with this observation:—"Unless these birds are very short-lived indeed, or unless they do not return to the district where they have been bred, they must undergo vast devastations somehow and somewhere; for the birds that return yearly bear no manner of proportion to those that retire."

THE SWIFT.

BLACK MARTIN, DEVILING, OR SCREAMER.

(*Hirundo apus*, Lin.—*Le Martinet noir*, Buff.)

LENGTH nearly eight inches. Bill black; eyes hazel; its general colour is that of a sooty black, with greenish reflections; the throat is white; the wings are long, measuring, from tip to tip, about eighteen inches; the tail is much forked; the legs are of a dark brown colour, and very short; the toes stand two and two on each side of the foot, and consist of two phalanges or joints only, which is a conformation peculiar to this bird. The female is rather less than the male; her plumage inclines more to brown, and the white on the throat is less distinct.

The Swift arrives later, and departs sooner than any of the tribe, from which it is probable that it has a longer journey to take than the others: it is larger, stronger, and its flight is more rapid than that of any of its kindred tribes, and it has but one brood in the year, so that the young ones have time to gain strength enough to accompany the parent birds in their distant excursions. They have been noticed at the Cape of Good Hope, and probably visit the more remote regions of Asia. Swifts are

almost continually on the wing; they fly higher, and wheel with bolder wing than the Swallows, with which they never intermingle. The life of the Swift seems to be divided into two extremes; the one of the most violent exertion, the other of perfect inaction; they must either shoot through the air, or remain close in their holes. They are seldom seen to alight; but if by any accident they should fall upon a piece of even ground, it is with difficulty they can recover themselves, owing to the shortness of their feet, and the great length of their wings. They are said to avoid heat, and for this reason pass the middle of the day in their holes; in the morning and evening they go out in quest of provision; they then are seen in flocks, describing an endless series of circles upon circles, sometimes in close ranks, pursuing the direction of a street, and sometimes whirling round a large edifice, all screaming together: they often glide along without stirring their wings, and on a sudden they move them with frequent and quickly repeated strokes. Swifts build their nests in elevated places; lofty steeples and high towers are generally preferred: sometimes they build under the arches of bridges, which, though their elevation is not great, are difficult of access: the nest is composed of a variety of materials, such as dry grass, moss, hemp, bits of cord, threads of silk and linen, small shreds of gauze, of muslin, feathers, and other light substances which they chance to find in the sweeping of towns. It is difficult to conceive how these birds, which are never seen to alight on the ground, gather these materials; some have supposed that they catch them in the air as they are carried up by the wind; others, that they raise them by glancing along the surface of the ground;

while others assert, with more probability, that they often rob the Sparrow of its little hoard, and frequently occupy the same hole, after driving out the former possessor. The female lays five white eggs, rather pointed and spindle-shaped: the young ones are hatched about the latter end of May; they begin to fly about the middle of June, and shortly after abandon their nests, after which the parents seem no more to regard them.

Swifts begin to assemble, previously to their departure, early in July: their numbers daily increase, and large bodies of them appear together: they soar higher in the air, with shriller cries, and fly differently from their usual mode. These meetings continue till towards the middle of August, after which they disappear.

THE NIGHT-JAR.

GOAT-SUCKER, DOR-HAWK, OR FERN OWL.

(*Caprimulgus Europeus*, Lin.—*L'Engoulivent*, Buff.)

The length of this bird is about ten inches and a half. The bill is small, flat, and somewhat hooked at the tip,

and is furnished on each side of the upper mandible with several strong bristles, whereby it secures its prey; the lower jaw is edged with a white stripe, which extends backward towards the head; the eyes are large, full, and black; the plumage is beautifully freckled and powdered with browns of various hues, mixed with rust colour and white, but so diversified as to exceed all description. The male is distinguished by an oval spot of white on the inner webs of the first three quill feathers, and at the ends of the two outermost feathers of the tail: the legs are short, rough, and scaly, and feathered below the knee; the toes are connected by a membrane as far as the first joint; the middle one is considerably larger than the rest, and the claw is serrated on one side.

To avoid perpetuating error, as much as possible, we have dropped the term Goat-sucker, which has no foundation but in ignorance and superstition, and have adopted one, which, though not universally known, bears some analogy to the nature and qualities of the bird to which it relates, both with respect to the time of its appearance, which is always in the dusk of the evening, in search of its prey, as well as to the jarring noise which it utters whilst at rest perched on a tree, and by which it is peculiarly distinguished.

The Night-jar is found in every part of the old continent, from Siberia to Greece, Africa, and India; it arrives in this country about the latter end of May, being one of our latest birds of passage, and departs some time in the latter end of August or the beginning of September: it is nowhere numerous, and never appears in flocks. Like the Owl, it is seldom seen in the day-time, unless disturbed, or in dark and gloomy days, when its eyes are

not dazzled by the bright rays of the sun. It feeds on insects, which it catches on the wing: it is a great destroyer of the cock-chafer or dor-beetle, from which circumstance, in some places, it is called the Dor-hawk. Six of these insects were found in the stomach of one of these birds, besides four or five large-bodied moths. Mr White supposes that its foot is useful in taking its prey, as he observed that it frequently, whilst on the wing, put forth its leg, with which it seemed to convey something to its mouth. These birds frequent moors and wild heathy tracts abounding with ferns: they make no nest, but the female deposits her eggs on the ground; she lays only two or three, which are of a dull white, spotted with brown. They are seen most frequently towards autumn: their motions are irregular and rapid, sometimes wheeling in quick succession round a tree or other object, diving at intervals as if to catch their prey, and then rising again as suddenly. When perched, the Night-jar sits usually on a bare twig, its head lower than its tail, and in this attitude utters its jarring note: it is likewise distinguished by a sort of buzzing which it makes while on the wing, and which has been compared to the noise caused by the quick rotation of a spinning-wheel, from which, in some places, it is called the Wheel-bird: sometimes it utters a small plaintive note or squeak, which it repeats four or five times in succession: the latter, probably, is the note of call to invite the female, as it has been observed to utter it when in pursuit of her. Buffon says, that it does not perch like other birds, sitting across the branch, but lengthwise. It is a solitary bird, and is generally seen alone; two are seldom found together, but sitting at a little distance from each other.

OF THE DOVE KIND.

THE various families which constitute this beautiful genus are distinguished by shades and gradations so minute, as to exceed all description. Of these by much the larger portion are the willing attendants on man, and depend on his bounty, seldom leaving the dwellings provided for them, and only roaming abroad to seek amusement, or to procure subsistence; but when we consider the lightness of their bodies, the great strength of their wings, and the amazing rapidity of their flight, it is a matter of wonder that they should submit even to a partial kind of domestication, or occupy those tenements fitted up for the purpose of breeding and rearing their young. It must be observed, however, that in these they live rather as voluntary captives, or transient guests, than permanent or settled inhabitants, enjoying a considerable portion of that liberty they so much delight in: on the slightest molestation they will sometimes abandon their mansion with all its conveniences, and seek a solitary lodgment in the holes of old walls or unfrequented towers; and some ornithologists assert, that they will even take refuge in the woods, where, impelled by instinct, they resume their native manners.

Of these the varieties and intermixtures are innumerable, and partake of all those varied hues which are the constant result of domestication. The manners of Pigeons are well known, few species being more universally diffused, and having a very powerful wing, they are enabled to perform very distant journies; accordingly wild and tame Pigeons occur in every climate, and although they thrive best in warm countries, yet with care

they succeed also in very northern latitudes. Every where their manners are gentle and lively; they are fond of society, and the very emblem of connubial attachment; they are faithful to their mates, whom they solicit with the softest cooings, the tenderest caresses, and the most graceful movements. The exterior form of the Pigeon is beautiful and elegant: the bill is weak, straight and slender, and has a soft protuberance at the base, in which the nostrils are placed: the legs are short and red, and the toes divided to the origin.

THE WILD PIGEON.

STOCK DOVE.

(*Columba œnas*, Lin.—*Le Biset*, Buff.)

Length fourteen inches. Bill pale red; the head, neck, and upper part of the back are of a deep blue grey colour, reflected on the sides of the neck with glossy

green and gold; the breast is of a pale reddish purple, or vinous colour; the lower part of the back and the rump light grey or ash colour, as are also the belly, thighs, and under tail coverts; the primary quill feathers are dusky, edged with white, the others grey, marked with two black spots on the exterior webs, forming two bars across each wing; the tail is ash colour, tipped with black; the lower half of the two outermost feathers is white: the legs are red; claws black. The Stock Dove, Rock Pigeon, and Wood Pigeon, with some small differences, may be included under the same denomination, and are probably the origin of most of those beautiful varieties, which, in a state of domestication, are dependent upon man for food.

Wild Pigeons are said to migrate in large flocks into England, at the approach of winter, from the northern regions, and return in the spring; many of them, however, remain in this country, only changing their quarters for the purpose of procuring food. They build their nests in the hollows of decayed trees, and commonly have two broods in the year. In a state of domestication their increase is prodigious; and, though they never lay more than two eggs at a time, yet, allowing them to breed nine times in the year, the produce of a single pair, at the expiration of four years, may amount to the enormous number of 14,762.* The male and female perform the office of incubation by turns, and feed their young by casting up the provisions out of their stomachs into the mouths of the young ones.

To describe the numerous varieties of the domestic Pigeon would exceed the limits of our work; we shall

* Stillingfleet's Tracts.

therefore barely mention the names of the most noted among them, such as Tumblers, Carriers, Jacobines, Croppers, Powters, Runts, Turbits, Shakers, Smiters, Owls, Nuns, &c. Of these the Carrier Pigeon is the most remarkably deserving of notice, having been made use of, from very early times, to convey intelligence on the most important occasions, and it never fails to execute its commission with unequalled expedition and certainty.* The Pigeon used on these occasions is taken from the place to which the advices are to be communicated, and the letter being tied under its wing, the bird is let loose, and in spite of surrounding armies and every obstacle that would have effectually prevented any other means of conveyance, guided by instinct alone, it returns directly home, where the intelligence is so much wanted. There are various instances on record of these birds having been employed during a siege, to convey an account of its progress, of the situation of the besieged, and of the probable means of relief: sometimes they have been the peaceful bearers of glad tidings to the anxious lover, and to the merchant of the no less welcome news of the safe arrival of his vessel at the desired port.

* In Asia Pigeons are still used to convey intelligence.

THE RING DOVE.

CUSHAT, OR QUEEST.

(*Columba palumbus*, Lin.—*Le Pigeon ramier*, Buff.)

THIS is the largest of all the Pigeon tribe, and measures above seventeen inches in length. The bill is of a pale red colour; the nostrils are covered with a mealy red fleshy membrane: the eyes are pale yellow; the upper parts of the body are of a bluish ash colour, deepest on the upper part of the back, the lower part of which, the rump, and fore part of the neck and the head, are of a pale ash colour; the lower part of the neck and breast are of a vinous ash colour; the belly, thighs, and vent are of a dull white; on the hinder part of the neck there is a semicircular line of white (whence its name) above and beneath which, the feathers are glossy, and of a changeable hue in different lights; the greater quills are dusky, and all of them excepting the outermost, edged with white; from the point of the wing a white line

extends downwards, passing above the bastard wing; the tail is ash colour, tipped with black: the legs are red, and partly covered with feathers; the claws black.

The Ring Dove is very generally diffused throughout Europe: it is said to be migratory, but that it does not leave us entirely we are well convinced, as we have frequently seen them during the winter on the banks of the Tyne, where they constantly breed in the spring. The nest is composed of small twigs, so loosely put together, that the eggs may be seen through it from below. The female lays two white eggs, and is generally supposed to have [illegible] broods in the year. They feed on wild fruits, herbs, and grain of all kinds; they likewise are very fond of the roots of the pernicious weeds so well known to farmers under the denomination of *whickens*, of which the *Triticum repens*, or couch-grass, is the principal one: their flesh is very delicious when they have fed upon these, but it soon acquires an unpleasant flavour when they have lived upon turnips, which, from necessity, they are driven to eat in severe winters. The Ring Dove has a louder and more plaintive sort of cooing than the common Pigeon, but is not heard except in pairing time, or during fine weather.

THE TURTLE DOVE.

(*Columba turtur*, Lin.—*La Tourterelle*, Buff.)

LENGTH somewhat more than twelve inches. The bill is brown; eyes yellow, encompassed with a crimson circle; the top of the head is ash colour, mixed with olive; each side of the neck is marked with a spot of black feathers, tipped with white; the back is ash colour, each feather margined with reddish brown; wing coverts and scapulars reddish brown, spotted with black; quill feathers dusky, with pale edges; the fore part of the neck and the breast are of a light purplish red; the belly, thighs, and vent white; the two middle feathers of the tail are brown, the others dusky, tipped with white, the two outermost also edged with the same: the legs are red. One of these birds, which was sent us by the Rev. Henry Ridley, was shot out of a flock at Prestwick-Carr, in Northumberland, in the month of September, 1794; it agreed in every respect with the Common Turtle,

excepting the mark on each side of the neck, which was wholly wanting: we suppose it to have been a young bird.

The note of the Turtle Dove is singularly tender and plaintive: in addressing his mate, the male makes use of a variety of winning attitudes, cooing at the same time in the most gentle and soothing accents; on which account the Turtle Dove has been represented, in all ages, the most perfect emblem of connubial attachment and constancy. The Turtle arrives late in the spring, and departs about the latter end of August: it frequents the thickest and most sheltered parts of the woods, where it builds its nest on the highest trees: the female lays two eggs, and has only one brood in this country, but in warmer climates it is supposed to breed several times in the year. Turtles are pretty common in Kent, where they are sometimes seen in flocks of twenty or more, frequenting the pea fields, and are said to do much damage. Their stay with us seldom exceeds more than four or five months, during which time they pair, build their nests, breed, and rear their young, which are strong enough to join them in their retreat.

OF THE GALLINACEOUS KIND.

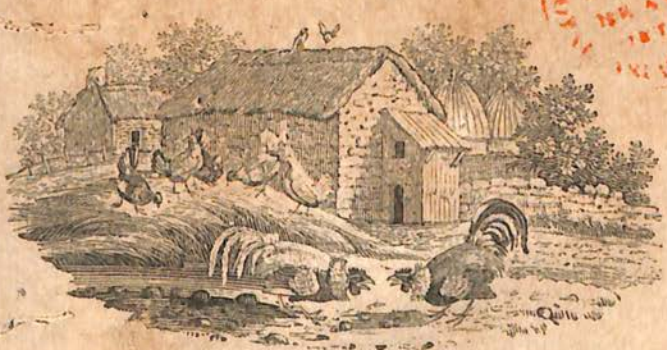
We are now to speak of a very numerous and useful class of birds, which, by the bountiful disposition of providence, is diffused throughout every country of the world, affording every where a plentiful and grateful supply of the most delicate, wholesome, and nutricious food. A large portion of these seem to have left their native woods to crowd around the dwellings of man, where, subservient to his purpose, they subsist upon the pickings of the farm-yard, the stable, or the dunghill, a chearful, active race, which enliven and adorn the rural scene, and require no other care than the fostering hand of the housewife to shelter and protect them. Some kinds, such as the Partridge, the Pheasant, and the like, are found only in cultivated places, at no great distance from the habitations of men; and, although they have not submitted to his dominion, they are nevertheless subject to his controlling power, and are the objects of his keenest pursuit:—whilst others, taking a wider range, find food and shelter in the deepest recesses of the woods and forests, sometimes subsisting upon wild and heathy mountains, or among rocks and precipices the most difficult of access.

The characters of the gallinaceous genus are generally well known: most of the species are distinguished above all others for the whiteness of their flesh; their bodies are large and bulky, and their heads comparatively small; the bill in all of them is short, strong, and somewhat curved; their wings are short and concave, and scarcely able to support their bodies, on which account they

seldom make long excursions: their legs are strong, and are furnished with a spur or a knob behind.

Birds of this kind are extremely prolific, and lay a great number of eggs: the young follow the mother as soon as hatched, and immediately learn to pick up the food which she is most assiduous in shewing them; on this account she generally makes her nest on the ground, or in places easy of access to her young brood.

Our gallant Chanticleer holds a distinguished rank in this class of birds, and stands foremost in the list of our domestic tribes; on which account we shall place him at the head.



THE DOMESTIC COCK.

(*Phasianus Gallus*, Lin.—*Le Coq*, Buff.)

THE Cock, like the Dog, in his present state of domestication, differs so widely from his wild original, as to render it a difficult matter to trace him back to his primitive stock; however it is generally agreed that he is to be found in a state of nature in the forests of India, and in most of the islands of the Indian seas. The varieties of this species are endless, every country, and almost every district of each country, producing a different kind. From Asia, where they are supposed to have originated,

they have been diffused over every part of the inhabited world. America was the last to receive them. It has been said that they were first introduced into Brazil by the Spaniards: they are now as common in all the inhabited parts of that vast continent as with us. Of those which have been selected for domestic purposes in this country, the principal are—

1. The Crested Cock, of which there are several varieties, such as the white-crested black ones; the black-crested white ones; the gold and silver ones, &c.

2. The Hamburgh Cock, named also Velvet Breeches, because its thighs and belly are of a soft black.* This is a very large kind, and much used for the table.

3. The Bantam, or Dwarf Cock, a diminutive but very spirited breed: its legs are furnished with long feathers which reach to the ground behind; it is very courageous, and will fight with one much stronger than itself.

4. The Frizzled Cock. The feathers in this are so curled up that they seem reversed, and to stand in opposite directions: they are originally from the southern parts of Asia, and when young are extremely sensible of cold. They have a disordered and unpleasant appearance, but are in much esteem for the table.

5. The Silk Fowls, whose skin and bones are black.

6. A kind which has no rump, and consequently no tail feathers.

We shall finish our list with the English Game-Cock, which stands unrivalled by those of any other nation for its invincible courage, and on that account is made use of as the instrument of the cruel sport of cock-fighting. To trace this custom to its origin we must look back into

* Buffon.

barbarous times, and lament that it still continues the disgrace of an enlightened and philosophic age. The Athenians allotted one day in the year to cock-fighting; the Romans are said to have learned it from them; and by that warlike people it was first introduced into this island. Henry VIII. was so attached to the sport, that he caused a commodious house to be erected for that purpose, which, though it is now applied to a very different use, still retains the name of the Cock-pit. The Chinese and many of the nations of India are so extravagantly fond of this unmanly sport, that, during the paroxysms of their phrensy, they will sometimes risk not only the whole of their property, but their wives and children, on the issue of a battle.

The appearance of the Game-cock, when in his full plumage and not mutilated for the purpose of fighting, is strikingly beautiful and animated: his head, which is small, is adorned with a beautiful red comb and wattles; his eyes sparkle with fire, and his whole demeanor bespeaks boldness and freedom. The feathers on his neck are long, and fall gracefully down upon his body, which is thick, firm, and compact; his tail is long, and forms a beautiful arch behind, which gives a grace to all his motions: his legs are strong, and are armed with sharp spurs, with which he defends himself and attacks his adversary. When surrounded by his females, his whole aspect is full of animation; he allows of no competitor, but on the approach of a rival, he rushes forward to instant combat, and either drives him from the field, or perishes in the attempt. The Cock is very attentive to his females, hardly ever losing sight of them; he leads, defends, and cherishes them, collects them together when they straggle,

and seems to eat unwillingly till he sees them feeding around him: when he loses them he utters his griefs, and from the different inflections of his voice, and the various significant gestures which he makes, one would be led to conclude that it is a species of language which serves to communicate his sentiments. The fecundity of the hen is great; she lays generally two eggs in three days, and continues to lay through the greater part of the year, excepting the time of moulting, which lasts about two months. After having laid about ten or twelve eggs, she prepares for the anxious task of incubation, and gives the most certain indications of her wants by her cries and the violence of her emotions. Should she be deprived of her own eggs, which is frequently the case, she will cover those of any other kind, or even fictitious ones of stone or chalk, by which means she wastes herself in fruitless efforts. A sitting hen is a lively emblem of the most affectionate solicitude and attention; she covers her eggs with her wings, fosters them with a genial warmth, and changes them gently, that all parts may be properly heated: she seems to perceive the importance of her employment, and is so intent on her occupation, that she neglects, in some measure, the necessary supplies of food and drink: she omits no care, overlooks no precaution, to complete the existence of the little incipient beings, and to guard against the dangers that threaten them. Buffon, with his usual elegance, observes, "that the condition of a sitting hen, however insipid it may appear to us, is perhaps not a tedious situation, but a state of continual joy, so much has Nature connected raptures with whatever relates to the multiplication of her creatures!"

For a curious account of the progress of incubation, in

the developement of the chick, we refer our readers to the above-mentioned author, who has given a minute detail of the several appearances which take place, at different stated periods, till the young chick is ready to break the shell and come forth.

The Egyptians have a method of hatching eggs without the assistance of the hen, and that in great numbers at once, by means of artificial heat, corresponding with the warmth of the hen: the eggs are placed in ovens, to which an equal and moderate degree of heat is applied, and every kind of moisture or pernicious exhalation carefully avoided; by which means, and by turning the eggs so that every part may enjoy alike the requisite heat, hundreds of chickens are produced at the same time.

THE PHEASANT

(*Phasianus Colchicus*, Lin.—*Le Faisan*, Buff.)

Is rather less than the Common Cock. The bill is of a pale horn colour; the nostrils are hid under an arched covering; the eyes are yellow, and surrounded by a space, in appearance like beautiful scarlet cloth, finely spotted with black; immediately under each eye there is a small patch of short feathers of a dark glossy purple; the upper parts of the head and neck are of a deep purple, varying to glossy green and blue; the lower parts of the

neck and the breast are of a reddish chesnut, with black indented edges; the sides and lower part of the breast are of the same colour, with pretty large tips of black to each feather, which in different lights vary to a glossy purple; the belly and vent are dusky; the back and scapulars are beautifully variegated with black and white, or cream colour speckled with black, and mixed with deep orange, all the feathers are edged with black; on the lower part of the back there is a mixture of green; the quills are dusky, freckled with white; wing coverts brown, glossed with green, and edged with white; rump plain reddish brown; the two middle feathers of the tail are about twenty inches long, the shortest on each side less than five, of a reddish brown colour, marked with transverse bars of black: the legs are dusky, with a short blunt spur on each, but in some old birds the spurs are as sharp as needles; between the toes there is a strong membrane.

The female is less, and does not exhibit that variety and brilliancy of colours which distinguish the male: the general colours are light and dark brown, mixed with black, the breast and belly finely freckled with small black spots on a light ground; the tail is short, and barred somewhat like that of the male; the space round the eye is covered with feathers.*

* The hen Pheasant is sometimes known, when she has done breeding, to assume the garb of the male. The late ingenious Mr John Hunter, F. R. S. in a paper read before the Royal Society, and published in the philosophical transactions for 1780, says—"It is remarked by those who are conversant with this bird, when wild, that there appears now and then a hen Pheasant with the feathers of the cock; and all that they have decided on this subject is, that this animal does not breed, and that its spurs do not grow." He further notices, that in two of these birds which

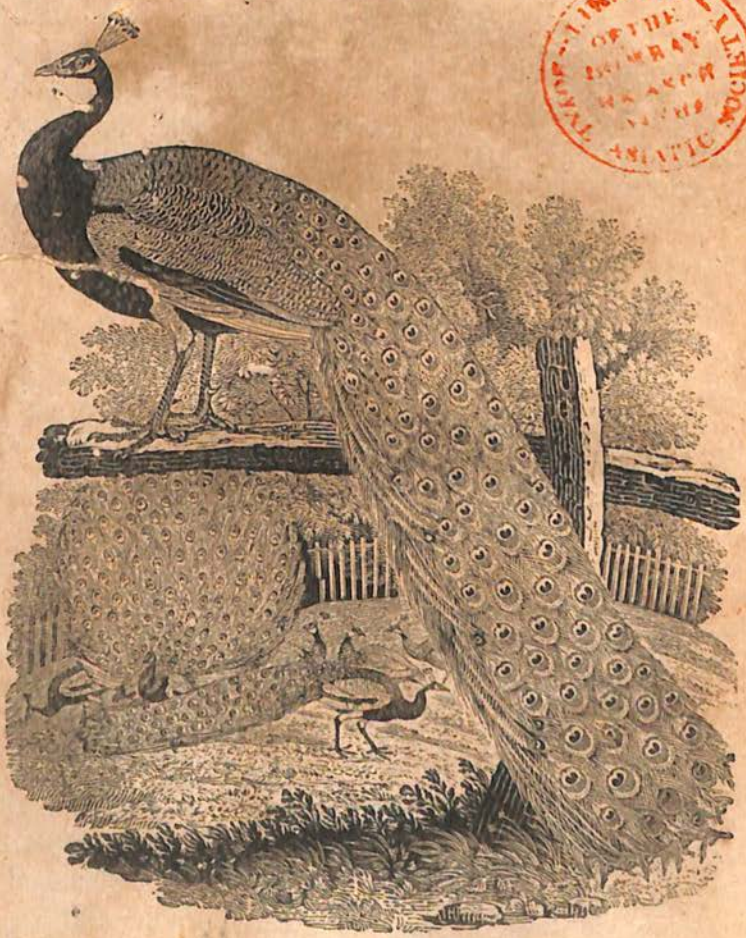
The Ring Pheasant is a fine variety of this species; its principal difference consists in a white ring, which encircles the lower part of the neck; the colours of the plumage in general are likewise more distinct and vivid. A fine specimen of this bird was sent us by the Rev. William Turner, of Newcastle, from which the figure was engraven. They are sometimes met with in the neighbourhood of Alnwick, whither they were brought by his Grace the Duke of Northumberland. That they intermix with the common breed is very obvious, as in some we have seen, the ring was hardly visible, and in others a few feathers only, marked with white, appeared on each side of the neck, forming a white spot. It is much to be regretted that this beautiful breed is likely soon to be destroyed, by those who pursue every species of game with an avaricious and indiscriminating rapacity.

There are many varieties of Pheasants, of extraordinary beauty and brilliancy of colours: in many gentlemen's woods there is a kind as white as snow, which will intermix with the common ones. Many of the gold and silver kinds, brought from China, are also kept in aviaries in this kingdom: the Common Pheasant is likewise a native of the east, and is the only one of its kind that has multiplied in our island. Pheasants are generally found in low woody places, on the borders of plains,

he dissected, he found them perfectly feminine, having "both the ovaria and the ovi-duct." A Pheasant exhibiting the same kind of plumage as those mentioned by Mr Hunter, was shot in January, 1805, by Sir Thomas Frankland, Bart. and presented to this work. This bird was of the size of the common hen Pheasant, its tail nearly the same; it was without spurs, and had no scarlet around the eyes, and in rising its cry was that of the hen: in other respects its plumage was nearly like that of the male, only not quite so brilliant in colour.

where they delight to sport: during the night they perch on the branches of trees. They are very shy birds, and do not associate together, except during the months of March and April, when the male seeks the female; they are then easily discoverable by the noise which they make in crowing and clapping their wings, which may be heard at some distance. The hen breeds on the ground, like the Partridge, and lays from twelve to fifteen eggs, which are smaller than those of the Common Hen: the young follow the mother as soon as they are freed from the shell. During the breeding season the cocks will sometimes intermix with the Common Hen, and produce a hybrid breed, of which we have known several instances.

are sufficiently strong, they are abandoned by the mother, and are then capable of enduring the utmost rigour of our winters.



THE PEACOCK.

(*Pavo cristatus*, Lin.—*Le Paon*, Buff.)

To describe the inimitable beauties of this elegant bird, in adequate terms, would be a task of no small difficulty.

" Its matchless plumage," says Buffon, " seems to combine all that delights the eye in the soft and delicate tints of the finest flowers, all that dazzles it in the sparkling lustre of the gems, and all that astonishes it in the grand display of the rainbow." Its head is adorned with a tuft, consisting of twenty-four feathers, whose slender shafts are furnished with webs only at the ends, painted with the most exquisite green, mixed with gold: the head, throat, neck, and breast, are of a deep blue, glossed with green and gold; the back of the same, tinged with bronze; the scapulars and lesser wing coverts are of a reddish cream colour, variegated with black; the middle coverts deep blue, glossed with green and gold; the greater coverts and bastard wing are of a reddish brown, as are also the quills, some of which are variegated with black and green; the belly and vent are black, with a greenish hue: but the distinguishing character of this singular bird is its train, which rises just above the tail, and, when erected, forms a fan of the most resplendent hues: the two middle feathers are sometimes four feet and a half long, the others gradually diminishing on each side; the shafts, which are white, are furnished from their origin nearly to the end, with parted filaments of varying colours ending in a flat vane, which is decorated with what is called *the eye*. " This is a brilliant spot, enamelled with the most enchanting colours; yellow, gilded with various shades; green, running into blue and bright violet, varying according to its different positions; the whole receiving additional lustre from the colour of the centre, which is a fine velvet black." When pleased or delighted, and in sight of his females, the Peacock erects his tail, and displays all the majesty of his beauty;

all his movements are full of dignity; his head and neck bend nobly back; his pace is slow and solemn, and he frequently turns slowly and gracefully round, as if to catch the sun-beams in every direction, and produce new colours of inconceivable richness and beauty, accompanied at the same time with a hollow murmuring voice, expressive of desire. The cry of the Peacock, at other times, is often repeated, and is very disagreeable.

The Peahen is somewhat less than the cock, and though furnished both with a train and crest, is destitute of those dazzling beauties which distinguish the male. She lays five or six eggs, of a whitish colour: for this purpose she chuses some secret spot, where she can conceal them from the male, who is apt to break them: she sits from twenty-five to thirty days, according to the temperature of the climate, and the warmth of the season.

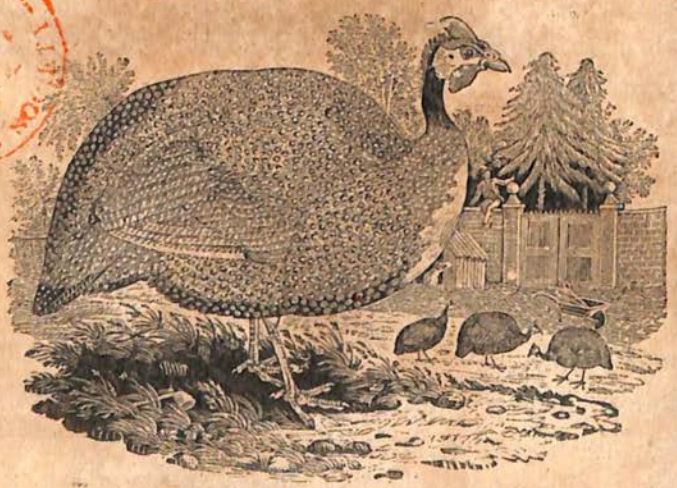
Peacocks were originally brought from the distant provinces of India, and thence have been diffused over every part of the world. The first notice taken of them is to be found in holy writ,* where we are told they made part of the cargoes of the rich and valuable fleet which every three years imported the treasures of the East to Solomon's court. They are sometimes found in a wild state in many parts of Asia and Africa: the largest and finest are said to be met with in the neighbourhood of the Ganges, and on the fertile plains of India, where they grow to a great size: under the influence of that luxuriant climate this beautiful bird exhibits its dazzling colours, which seem to vie with the gems and precious stones produced in those delightful regions. In colder climates they require great care in rearing, and do not

* 2d Chron. ix. 21.

obtain their full plumage till the third year. In former times they were considered as a delicacy, and made a part of the luxurious entertainments of the Roman voluptuaries.

The females of this species, like the Pheasant, have been known to assume the appearance of the male, by a total change of colour; this is said to take place after they have done laying. A bird of this kind is preserved in the Leverian Museum.

White Peacocks are not uncommon in England; the eyes of the train are barely visible, and may be traced by a different undulation of shade upon the pure white of the tail.



THE PINTADO.

GUINEA HEN, OR PEARLED HEN.

(*Numidia Meleagris*, Lin.—*La Pintade*, Buf.)

This bird is somewhat larger than the common Hen. Its head is bare of feathers, and covered with a naked

skin, of a bluish colour; on the top is a callous protuberance, of a conical form; at the base of the upper bill, on each side, there hangs a loose wattle, which in the female is red, and in the male of a bluish colour; the upper part of the neck is almost naked, being very thinly furnished with a few straggling hairy feathers; the skin is of a light ash colour; the lower part of the neck is covered with feathers of a purple hue; the general colour of the plumage is a dark bluish grey, sprinkled with round white spots of different sizes, resembling pearls, from which it has been called the Pearled Hen; its wings are short, and its tail pendulous, like that of the Partridge: its legs are of a dark colour.

This species, which is now very common in this country, was originally brought from Africa, whence it has been diffused over every part of Europe, the West Indies, and America: it formed a part of the Roman banquets, and is now much esteemed as a delicacy, especially when young. The female lays a great number of eggs, which she frequently secretes till she has produced her young brood: the egg is smaller than that of a common Hen, and of a rounder shape; it is very delicious eating.

The Pintado is a restless and a very clamorous bird; it has a harsh creaking note, which is very grating and unpleasant: it scrapes the ground like the Hen, and rolls in the dust to free itself from insects. During the night it perches on high places; if disturbed, it alarms every thing within hearing by its unceasing cry. In its natural state of freedom it is said to prefer marshy places.

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THE WOOD GROUSE.

COCK OF THE WOOD, OR CAPERCAILE.

(*Tetrao urogallus*, Lin.—*Le grand Coq de Bruyere*, Buff.)

This bird is as large as the Turkey, is about two feet nine inches in length, and weighs from twelve to fifteen pounds. The bill is very strong, convex, and of a horn colour; over each eye there is a naked skin, of a bright red colour: the eyes are hazel; the nostrils are small, and almost hid under a covering of short feathers, which extend under the throat, and are there much longer than the rest, and of a black colour; the head and neck are elegantly marked with small transverse lines of black and

grey, as are also the back and wings, but more irregularly; the breast is black, richly glossed with green on the upper part, and mixed with a few white feathers on the belly and thighs; the sides are marked like the neck; the tail consists of eighteen feathers, which are black, those on the sides are marked with a few white spots: the legs are very stout, and covered with brown feathers; the toes are furnished on each side with a strong pectinated membrane. The female is considerably less than the male, and differs from him greatly in her colours: her throat is red; the transverse bars on the head, neck, and back are red and black; the breast is of a pale orange colour; belly barred with orange and black, the top of each feather white; the back and wings are mottled with reddish brown and black; the scapulars tipped with white; the tail is of a deep rust colour, barred with black, and tipped with white.

This beautiful kind is found chiefly in high mountainous regions, and is very rare in Great Britain. Mr Pennant mentions one, as an uncommon instance, which was shot near Inverness. It was formerly met with in Ireland, but is now supposed to be extinct there. In Russia, Sweden, and other northern countries, it is very common: it lives in the forests of pine, with which those countries abound, and feeds on the cones of the fir trees, which, at some seasons, give an unpleasant flavour to its flesh, so as to render it unfit for the table; it likewise eats various kinds of plants and berries, particularly the juniper. Early in the spring the season for pairing commences: during this period, the cock places himself on an eminence, where he displays a variety of pleasing attitudes; the feathers on his head stand erect, his neck

swells, his tail is displayed, and his wings trail almost on the ground, his eyes sparkle, and the scarlet patch on each side of his head assumes a deeper dye; at the same time he utters his well-known cry, which has been compared to the sound produced by the whetting of a scythe: it may be heard at a considerable distance, and never fails to draw around him his faithful mates. The female lays from eight to sixteen eggs, which are white, spotted with yellow, and larger than those of the Common Hen: for this purpose she chuses some secret spot, where she can sit in security: she covers her eggs carefully over with leaves, when she is under the necessity of leaving them in search of food. The young follow the hen as soon as they are hatched, sometimes with part of the shell attached to them.

THE BLACK GROUSE.

BLACK GAME, OR BLACK COCK.

(*Tetrao Tetrix*, Lin.—*Le Coq de Bruyere a queue fourchue*, Buff.)

This bird, though not larger than the common hen, weighs nearly four pounds: its length is about one foot ten inches, breadth two feet nine. The bill is black; the eyes dark blue; below each eye there is a spot of a dirty white colour, and above a larger one, of a bright scarlet, which extends almost to the top of the head; the general colour of the plumage is a deep black, richly glossed with blue on the neck and rump; the lesser wing coverts are dusky brown; the greater are white, which extends to the ridge of the wing, forming a spot of that colour on the shoulder when the wing is closed; the quills are brown, the lower parts and tips of the secondaries are white, forming a bar of white across the wing;

there is likewise a spot of white on the bastard wing; the feathers of the tail are almost square at the ends, and, when spread out, form a curve on each side; the under tail coverts are of a pure white: the legs and thighs are of a dark brown colour, mottled with white; the toes are toothed on the edges like those of the former species. In some of our specimens the nostrils were thickly covered with feathers, whilst in others they were quite bare, probably owing to the different ages of the birds.

These birds, like the former, are found chiefly in high and wooded situations in the northern parts of our island; they are common in Russia, Siberia, and other northern countries: they feed on various kinds of berries and other fruits, the produce of wild and mountainous places: in summer they frequently come down from their lofty situations for the sake of feeding on corn. They do not pair, but on the return of spring the males assemble in great numbers at their accustomed resorts, on the tops of high and heathy mountains, when the contest for superiority commences, and continues with great bitterness till the vanquished are put to flight: the victors being left in possession of the field, place themselves on an eminence, clap their wings, and with loud cries give notice to their females, who immediately resort to the spot. It is said that each cock has two or three hens, which seem particularly attached to him. The female is about one-third less than the male, and differs from him considerably in colour; her tail is likewise much less forked. She makes an artless nest on the ground, where she lays six or eight eggs, of a yellowish colour, with freckles and spots of a rusty brown. The young cock, at first resemble the mother, and do not acquire their male garb till

towards the end of autumn, when the plumage gradually changes to a deeper colour, and assumes that of a bluish black, which it afterwards retains.

RED GROUSE.

RED GAME, GORCOCK, OR MOORCOCK.

(*Tetrao Scoticus*, Lin.—*L'Attagas*, Buff.)

The length of this bird is fifteen inches; the weight about nineteen ounces. The bill is black; the eyes hazel; the nostrils shaded with small red and black feathers; at the base of the lower bill there is a white spot on each side; the throat is red; each eye is arched with a large naked spot, of a bright scarlet colour; the whole upper part of the body is beautifully mottled with deep red and black, which gives it the appearance of tortoise-shell; the breast and belly are of a purplish hue, crossed with small dusky lines; the tail consists of sixteen feathers, of equal lengths, the four middlemost barred with red, the

others black; the quills are dusky; the legs are cloathed with soft white feathers down to the claws, which are strong, and of a light colour. The female is somewhat less; the naked skin above each eye is not so conspicuous, and the colours of her plumage in general are much lighter than those of the male.

This bird is found in great plenty in the wild, heathy, and mountainous tracts in the northern counties of England; it is likewise common in Wales, and in the Highlands of Scotland. Mr Pennant supposes it to be peculiar to Britain; those found in the mountainous parts of France, Spain, Italy, and elsewhere, as mentioned by M. Buffon, are probably varieties of this kind, and no doubt would breed with it. It is to be wished that attempts were more frequently made to introduce a greater variety of these useful birds into this country, to stock our waste and barren moors with a rich fund of delicate and wholesome food; but till the legislature shall alter or abrogate our very unequal and injudicious game laws, there hardly remains a single hope for the preservation of such birds of this species as we now have.

Red Grouse pair in the spring: the female lays eight or ten eggs on the ground. The young ones follow the hen the whole summer: as soon as they have attained their full size, they unite in flocks of forty or fifty, and are then exceedingly shy and wild.

WHITE GROUSE.

WHITE GAME, OR PTARMIGAN.

(*Tetrao lagopus*, Lin.—*Le Lagopède*, Buff.)

This bird is nearly the same size as the Red Grouse. Its bill is black; the upper parts of its body are of a pale brown or ash colour, mottled with small dusky spots and bars; the bars on the head and neck are somewhat broader, and are mixed with white; the under parts are white, as are also the wings, excepting the shafts of the quills, which are black. This is its summer dress, which in winter is changed to a pure white, excepting that in the male there is a black line between the bill and the eye: the tail consists of sixteen feathers; the two middle ones are ash coloured in summer, and white in winter, the next two are slightly marked with white near the ends, the rest are wholly black; the upper tail coverts are long, and almost cover the tail.

The White Grouse is fond of lofty situations, where

it braves the severest cold: it is found in most of the northern parts of Europe, even as far as Greenland; in this country it is only to be met with on the summits of some of our highest hills, chiefly in the Highlands of Scotland, in the Hebrides and Orkneys, and sometimes, but rarely, on the lofty hills of Cumberland and Wales. Buffon, speaking of this bird, says, that it avoids the solar heat, and prefers the biting frosts on the tops of mountains; for as the snow melts on the sides of the mountains, it constantly ascends, till it gains the summit, where it forms holes, and burrows in the snow. They pair at the same time as the Red Grouse: the female lays eight or ten eggs, which are white, spotted with brown: she makes no nest, but deposits them on the ground. In winter they fly in flocks, and are so little accustomed to the sight of man, that they are easily shot or taken in a snare. They feed on the wild productions of the hills, which sometimes give the flesh a bitter, but not unpalatable taste: it is dark coloured, and has somewhat the flavour of the hare.

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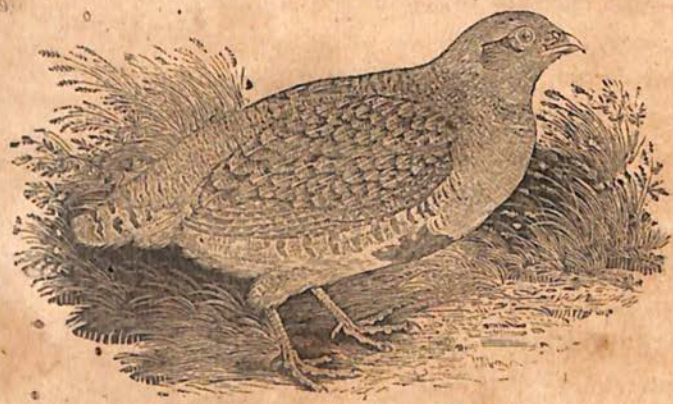


THE PARTRIDGE.

(*Tetrao Perdix*, Lin.—*Le Perdrix Grise*, Buff.)

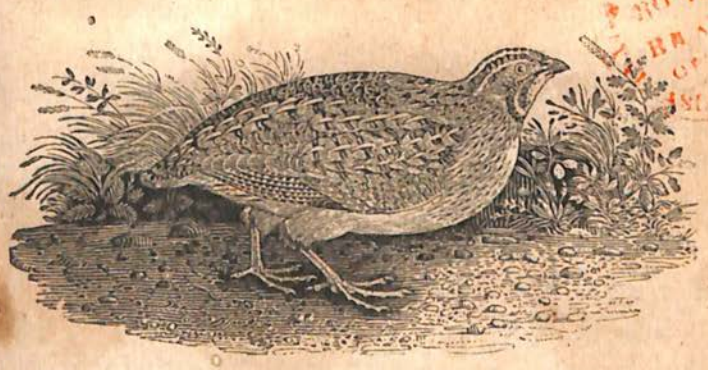
THE length of this bird is about thirteen inches. The bill is light brown; eyes hazel; the general colour of its plumage is brown and ash, elegantly mixed with black; each feather is streaked down the middle with buff colour; the sides of the head are tawny; under each eye there is a small saffron-coloured spot, which has a granulated appearance, and between the eye and the ear a naked skin of a bright scarlet, which is not very conspicuous but in old birds; on the breast there is a crescent of a deep chesnut colour: the tail is short: the legs are of a greenish white, and are furnished with a small knob behind. The female has no crescent on the breast, and her colours in general are not so distinct and bright as those of the male.

Partridges are found chiefly in temperate climates; the extremes of heat and cold are equally unfavourable to them: they are no where in greater plenty than in this island, where, in their season, they contribute to our most

elegant entertainments. It is much to be lamented, however, that the means taken to preserve this valuable bird should, in a variety of instances, prove its destruction: the proper guardians of the eggs and young ones, tied down by ungenerous restrictions, are led to consider them as a growing evil, and not only connive at their destruction, but too frequently assist in it.

Partridges pair early in the spring: the female lays from fourteen to eighteen or twenty eggs, making her nest of dry leaves and grass upon the ground. The young birds learn to run as soon as hatched, frequently encumbered with part of the shell sticking to them. It is no uncommon thing to introduce Partridge's eggs under the Common Hen, who hatches and rears them as her own: in this case the young birds require to be fed with ants' eggs, which are their favourite food, and without which it is almost impossible to bring them up; they likewise eat insects, and when full grown, feed on all kinds of grain and young plants. The affection of the Partridge for her young is peculiarly strong and lively; she is greatly assisted in the care of rearing them by her mate: they lead them out in common, call them together, point out to them their proper food, and assist them in finding it by scratching the ground with their feet; they frequently sit close by each other, covering the chickens with their wings, like the Hen. In this situation they are not easily flushed; the sportsman, who is attentive to the preservation of his game, will carefully avoid giving any disturbance to a scene so truly interesting; but should the pointer come too near, or unfortunately run in upon them, there are few who are ignorant of the confusion that follows: the male first gives

the signal of alarm by a peculiar cry of distress, throwing himself at the same moment more immediately into the way of danger, in order to deceive or mislead the enemy; he flies, or rather runs, along the ground, hanging his wings, and exhibiting every symptom of debility, whereby the dog is decoyed, in the too eager expectation of an easy prey, to a distance from the covey; the female flies off in a contrary direction, and to a greater distance, but returning soon after by secret ways, she finds her scattered brood closely squatted among the grass, and collecting them with haste, she leads them from the danger, before the dog has had time to return from his pursuit.



THE QUAIL.

(*Tetrao coturnix*, Lin.—*Le Caille*, Buff.)

The length seven inches and a half. Bill dusky; eyes hazel; the colours of the head, neck, and back are a mixture of brown, ash colour, and black; over each eye there is a yellowish streak, and another of the same colour down the middle of the forehead; a dark line passes from each corner of the bill, forming a kind of gorget above the breast; the scapular feathers are marked by a

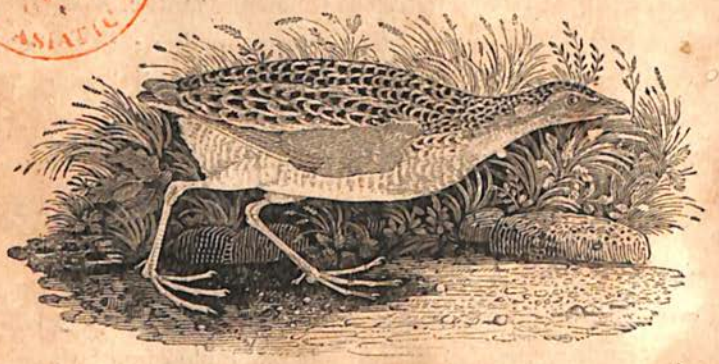
light yellowish streak down the middle of each; the quills are of a lightish brown, with small rust-coloured bands on the exterior edges of the feathers; the breast is of a pale rust colour, spotted with black, and streaked with pale yellow; the tail consists of twelve feathers, barred like the wings; the belly and thighs are of a yellowish white: legs pale brown. The female wants the black spots on the breast, and is easily distinguished by a less vivid plumage.

Quails are almost universally diffused throughout Europe, Asia, and Africa; they are birds of passage, and are seen in immense flocks traversing the Mediterranean sea, from Europe to the shores of Africa, in the autumn, and returning again in the spring, frequently alighting in their passage on many of the islands of the Archipelago, which they almost cover with their numbers. On the western coasts of the kingdom of Naples such prodigious numbers have appeared, that an hundred thousand have been taken in a day within the space of four or five miles. From these circumstances it appears highly probable, that the Quails which supplied the Israelites with food, during their journey through the wilderness, were sent thither on their passage to the north, by a wind from the south-west, sweeping over Egypt and Ethiopia towards the shores of the Red Sea. Quails are not very numerous here; they breed with us, and many of them are said to remain throughout the year, changing their quarters from the interior counties to the sea coast. The female makes her nest like the Partridge, and lays to the number of six or seven* eggs of a greyish colour, speckled

* In France they are said to lay fifteen or twenty. *Buff.*

They are sometimes seen in a bevy of fifteen together, in this country. They fly quick and near the ground.

with brown. The young birds follow the mother as soon as hatched, but do not continue long together; they are scarcely grown up before they separate; or, if kept together, they fight obstinately with each other, their quarrels frequently terminating in each other's destruction. From this quarrelsome disposition in the Quail it was that they were formerly made use of by the Greeks and Romans as we use Game-cocks, for the purpose of fighting. We are told that Augustus punished a prefect of Egypt with death, for bringing to his table one of these birds which had acquired celebrity by its victories. At this time the Chinese are much addicted to the amusement of fighting Quails, and in some parts of Italy it is said likewise to be no unusual practice. After feeding two Quails very highly, they place them opposite to each other, and throw in a few grains of seed between them; the birds rush upon each other with the utmost fury, striking with their bills and heels till one of them yields.



THE CORN-CRAKE.

LAND RAIL, OR DAKER HEN.

(*Rallus-Crex*, Lin.—*Le Rale de Genet*, Buff.)

Length rather more than nine inches. The bill is light brown; the eyes hazel; all the feathers on the upper parts of the plumage are of a dark brown, edged with pale rust colour; both wing coverts and quills are of a deep chesnut; the fore part of the neck and the breast are of a pale ash colour; a streak of the same colour extends over each eye from the bill to the side of the neck; the belly is of a yellowish white; the sides, thighs, and vent are marked with faint rusty-coloured bars: the legs are of a pale flesh colour.

We have ventured to remove this bird from the usual place assigned to it among those to which it seems to have little or no analogy, and have placed it among others, to which, in most respects, it bears a strong affinity. It makes its appearance about the same time as the Quail, and frequents the same places, whence it is called, in some countries, the King of the Quails. Its well-known cry is first heard as soon as the grass becomes

long enough to shelter it, and continues till the grass is cut; but the bird is seldom seen, for it constantly skulks among the thickest part of the herbage, and runs so nimbly through it, winding and doubling in every direction, that it is difficult to come near it: when hard pushed by the dog, it sometimes stops short and squats down, by which means its too eager pursuer overshoots the spot, and loses the scent. It seldom springs but when driven to extremity, and generally flies with its legs hanging down, but never to a great distance: as soon as it alights, it runs off, and before the fowler has reached the spot, the bird is at a considerable distance.

The Corn-crake leaves this island before the winter, and repairs to other countries in search of its food, which consists principally of slugs, of which it destroys prodigious numbers; it likewise feeds on worms and insects, as well as on seeds of various kinds. It is very common in Ireland, and is seen in great numbers in the island of Anglesea in its passage to that country. On its first arrival in England, it is so lean as to weigh less than six ounces, from which one would conclude that it must have come from distant parts; before its departure, however, it has been known to exceed eight ounces, and is then very delicious eating. The female lays ten or twelve eggs, on a nest made of a little moss or dry grass loosely put together: they are of a pale ash colour, marked with rust-coloured spots. The young Crakes are covered with a black down; they soon find the use of their legs, for they follow the mother immediately after they have burst the shell.

The foregoing figure was made from a living bird, for which the work is indebted to the late Lieutenant H. F. Gibson.

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GREAT BUSTARD.

(Otis tarda, Lin.—*L'Outarde*, Buff.)

THIS very singular bird, which is the largest of our land birds, is about four feet long, and weighs from twenty-five to thirty pounds; its characters are peculiar, and with such as connect it with birds of the gallinaceous kind, it has others which seem to belong to the Ostrich

and the Cassowary. Its bill is strong, and rather convex; its eyes red; on each side of the lower bill there is a tuft of feathers about nine inches long; its head and neck are ash coloured. In the one described by Edwards, there were on each side of the neck two naked spots, of a violet colour, but which appeared to be covered with feathers when the neck was much extended. The back is barred transversely with black and bright rust colour on a pale reddish ground; the quills are black; the belly white: the tail consists of twenty feathers; the middle ones are rust colour, barred with black; those on each side are white, with a bar or two of black near the ends: the legs are long, naked above the knees, and dusky; it has no hind toe; its nails are short, strong, and convex both above and below; the bottom of the foot is furnished with a callous prominence, which serves instead of a heel. The female is not much more than half the size of the male: the top of her head is of a dear orange, the rest of the head brown; her colours are not so bright as those of the male, and she has no tuft on each side of the head. There is likewise another very essential difference between the male and the female: the former is furnished with a sack or pouch, situated in the fore part of the neck, and capable of containing about two quarts; the entrance to it is immediately under the tongue.* This singular reservoir was first discovered by Dr Douglas, who supposes that the bird fills it with water as a supply in the midst of those dreary plains where it is accustomed to wander;† it likewise makes a further

* Barrington's Mis. p. 553.

† One of these birds, which was kept in a caravan, among other animals, as a show, lived without drinking. It was fed with the leaves of cabbages and other greens, and also with flesh and bread.

use of it in defending itself against the attacks of birds of prey; on such occasions it throws out the water with such violence as not unfrequently to baffle the pursuit of its enemy.

Bustards were formerly more common in this island than at present; they are now found only in the open countries of the South and East, in the plains of Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, and in some parts of Yorkshire; they were formerly met with in Scotland, but are now supposed to be extinct there. They are slow in taking wing, but run with great rapidity, and when young are sometimes taken with greyhounds, which pursue them with great avidity: the chace is said to afford excellent diversion. The Great Bustard is granivorous, but feeds chiefly on herbs of various kinds; it is also fond of those worms which are seen to come out of the ground in great numbers before sun-rise in the summer; in winter it frequently feeds on the bark of trees: like the Ostrich, it swallows small stones,* bits of metal, and the like. The female builds no nest, but making a hole on the ground, drops two eggs, about the size of those of a Goose, of a pale olive brown, with dark spots. She sometimes leaves her eggs in quest of food; and if, during her absence, any one should handle, or even breathe upon them, she immediately abandons them.

Bustards are found in various parts of Europe, Asia, and Africa, but have not hitherto been discovered on the new continent.

* In the stomach of one which was opened by the academicians, there were found, besides small stones, to the number of ninety doubloons, all worn and polished by the attrition of the stomach.—*Buff.*

THE LITTLE BUSTARD.

(*Otis Tetrax*, Lin.—*La petite Outarde*, Buff.)

Length only seventeen inches. The bill is pale brown; irides red; the top of the head is black, spotted with pale rust colour; the sides of the head, the chin, and throat, are of a reddish white, marked with a few dark spots; the whole neck is black, encircled with an irregular band of white near the top and bottom; the back and wings are rust colour, mottled with brown, and crossed with fine irregular black lines; the under parts of the body, and outer edges of the wings, are white: the tail consists of eighteen feathers; the middle ones are tawny, barred with black, the others are white, marked with a few irregular bands of black: the legs are grey. The female is smaller, and has not the black collar on the neck; in other respects she nearly resembles the male.

This bird is very uncommon in this country; and we have seen only two of them, both females. The figure was drawn from one sent by W. Trevelyan, Esq. which was taken on the edge of Newmarket Heath, and kept alive about three weeks in a kitchen, where it was fed with bread and other things, such as poultry eat. It is very common in France, where it is taken in nets like the Partridge. It is a very shy and cunning bird; if disturbed, it flies two or three hundred paces, not far from the ground, and then runs away much faster than any one can follow on foot. The female lays her eggs in June, to the number of three or four, of a glossy green colour: as soon as the young are hatched, she leads them about as the Hen does her chickens: they begin to fly about the middle of August.

Both this and the Great Bustard are excellent eating, and, we should imagine, would well repay the trouble of domestication: indeed it seems surprising that we should suffer these fine birds to run wild, and be in danger of total extinction, which, if properly cultivated, might afford as excellent a repast as our own domestic poultry, or even as the Turkey, for which we are indebted to distant countries.

OF THE PLOVER.

This genus is distinguished by a large full eye; the bill is straight, short, and rather swollen towards the tip; the head is large; the legs are naked above the knee; and most of the species are without the hind toe.

Although the Plover has generally been classed with those birds whose business is wholly among waters, we cannot help considering the greater part of them as partaking entirely of the nature of land birds. Many of them breed upon our loftiest mountains, and though they are frequently seen upon the sea-coasts, feeding with birds of the water kind, yet it must be observed that they are no more water birds than many of our small birds which repair thither for the same purpose. The Long-legged Plover and the Sanderling are waders, and belong more immediately to the water birds, to which we refer them: the Great Plover and the Lapwing we consider as entirely connected with birds of the Plover kind; the former has usually been classed with the Bustard, the latter with the Sandpiper; but they differ very materially from both, and seem to agree in more essential points with this kind: we have therefore given them a place in this part of our work, where, with the rest of the Plovers, they may be considered as connecting the two great divisions of land and water birds, to both of which they are in some degree allied.

THE GREAT PLOVER.

THICK-KNEE'D BUSTARD, STONE CURLEW, NORFOLK PLOVER.

(*Charadrius Oedicnemus*, Lin.—*Le grand Pluvier*, Buff.)

THE length of this bird is about sixteen inches. Its bill is long, yellowish at the base, and black at the tip; its irides and eye-lids are pale yellow; above each eye there is a pale streak, and beneath one of the same colour extends to the bill; the throat is white; the head, neck, and all the upper parts of the body are of a pale tawny brown; down the middle of each feather there is a dark streak; the fore part of the neck and the breast are nearly of the same colour, but much paler; the belly, thighs, and vent are of a pale yellowish white; the quills are black; the tail is short and rounded, and a dark band

crosses the middle of each feather; the tips are black, the rest white: the legs are yellow, and naked above the knees, which are very thick, as if swollen, hence its name; the claws are black.

This bird is found in great plenty in Norfolk and several of the southern counties, but is no where to be met with in the northern parts of our island; it prefers dry and stony places, on the sides of sloping banks. It makes no nest: the female lays two or three eggs on the bare ground, sheltered by a stone, or in a small hole formed in the sand; they are of a dirty white, marked with spots of a deep reddish colour, mixed with slight streaks. Although this bird has great power of wing, and flies with great strength, it is seldom seen during the day, except surprised, when it springs to some distance, and generally escapes before the sportsman comes within gun-shot; it likewise runs on the ground almost as swiftly as a dog; after running some time it stops short, holding its head and body still, and on the least noise, squats close on the ground. In the evening it comes out in quest of food, and may then be heard at a great distance: its cry is singular, resembling a hoarse kind of whistle three or four times repeated, and has been compared to the turning of a rusty handle. Buffon endeavours to express it by the words *turrlui*, *turrlui*, and says it resembles the sound of a third flute, dwelling on three or four tones from a flat to a sharp. Its food consists chiefly of worms. It is said to be good eating when young; the flesh of the old ones is hard, black and dry. Mr White mentions them as frequenting the district of Selborne, in Hampshire. He says, that the young run immediately from the nest, almost as soon as they are excluded, like Partridges; that

the dam leads them to some stony field, where they bask, skulking among the stones, which they resemble so nearly in colour, as not easily to be discovered.

Birds of this kind are migratory; they arrive in April, live with us all the spring and summer, and at the beginning of autumn prepare to take leave by getting together in flocks: it is supposed that they retire to Spain, and frequent the sheep-walks with which that country abounds.

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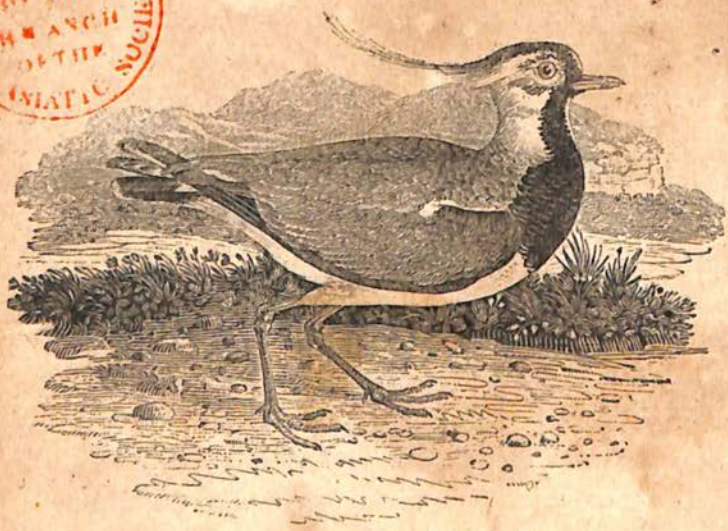


THE PEE-WIT.

LAPWING, BASTARD PLOVER, OR TE-WIT.

(*Tringa vanellus*, Lin.—*Le Vanneau*, Buff.)

This bird is about the size of a Pigeon. Its bill is black; eyes large and hazel; the top of the head is black, glossed with green; a tuft of long narrow feathers issues from the back part of the head, and turns upwards

at the end; some of them are four inches in length: the sides of the head and neck are white; which is interrupted by a blackish streak above and below the eye; the back part of the neck is of a very pale brown; the fore part, as far as the breast, is black; the back and the wing coverts are of a dark green, glossed with purple and blue reflections; the quills are black, the first four tipped with white; the breast and belly are of a pure white; the upper tail coverts and vent pale chesnut; the tail is white at the base, the rest of it is black, with pale tips, the outer feathers almost wholly white: the legs are red; claws black; hind claw very short.

This bird is a constant inhabitant of this country; but as it subsists chiefly on worms, it is forced to change its place in quest of food, and is frequently seen in great numbers by the sea-shores, where it finds an abundant supply. It is every where well known by its loud and incessant cries, which it repeats without intermission whilst on the wing, and from which, in most languages a name has been given to it, imitative of the sound. The Pee-wit is a lively, active bird, almost continually in motion; it sports and frolics in the air in all directions, and assumes a variety of attitudes; it remains long upon the wing, and sometimes rises to a considerable height; it runs along the ground very nimbly, and springs and bounds from spot to spot with great agility. The female lays four eggs, of a dirty olive, spotted with black: she makes no nest, but deposits them upon a little dry grass hastily scraped together: the young birds run very soon after they are hatched: during this period the old ones are very assiduous in their attenton to their charge; on the approach of any person to the place of their deposit,

they flutter round his head with cries of the greatest inquietude, which increase as he draws nearer the spot where the brood are squatted; in case of extremity, and as a last resource, they run along the ground as if lame, in order to draw off the attention of the fowler from any further pursuit. The young Lapwings are first covered with a blackish down interspersed with long white hairs, which they gradually lose, and about the latter end of July they acquire their beautiful plumage. At this time they assemble in flocks, which hover in the air, saunter in the meadows, and after rain, disperse among the ploughed fields. In October the Lapwings are very fat, and are then said to be excellent eating. Their eggs are considered as a great delicacy, and are sold in London at three shillings a dozen.

The following anecdote communicated by the late Rev. J. Carlyle, is worthy of notice, as it shews the domestic nature of this bird, as well as the art with which it conciliates the regard of animals differing from itself in nature, and generally considered as hostile to every species of the feathered tribe. Two of these birds, given to Mr Carlyle, were put into a garden, where one of them soon died; the other continued to pick up such food as the place afforded, till winter deprived it of its usual supply: necessity soon compelled it to draw nearer the house, by which it gradually became familiarised to occasional interruptions from the family. At length one of the servants, when she had occasion to go into the back-kitchen with a light, observed that the Lapwing always uttered his cry '*pee-wit*' to obtain admittance. He soon grew more familiar; as the winter advanced, he approached as far as the kitchen, but with

much caution, as that part of the house was generally occupied by a dog and a cat, whose friendship the Lapwing at length conciliated so entirely, that it was his regular custom to resort to the fire-side as soon as it grew dark, and spend the evening and night with his two associates, sitting close by them, and partaking of the comforts of a warm fire-side. As soon as spring appeared, he left off coming to the house, and betook himself to the garden; but on the approach of winter, he had recourse to his old shelter and his old friends, who received him very cordially. Security was productive of insolence; what was at first obtained with caution, was afterwards taken without reserve: he frequently amused himself with washing in the bowl which was set for the dog to drink out of, and while he was thus employed, he shewed marks of the greatest indignation if either of his companions presumed to interrupt him. He died in the asylum he had chosen, being choaked with something he had picked up from the floor. During his confinement, crumbs of wheaten bread were his principal food, which he preferred to any thing else.

THE GOLDEN PLOVER.

YELLOW PLOVER.

(*Charadrius Pluvialis*, Lin.—*Le Pluvier doré*, Buff.)

The size of the Turtle. Bill dusky; eyes dark; all the upper parts of the plumage are marked with bright yellow spots upon a dark brown ground; the fore part of the neck and the breast are the same, but much paler; the belly is almost white; the quills are dusky; the tail is marked with dusky and yellow bars; the legs are black. Birds of this species vary much from each other; in some which we have had, the breast was marked with black and white; in others, it was almost black; but whether this difference arose from age or sex, we are at a loss to determine.

The Golden Plover is common in this country and all the northern parts of Europe; it is very numerous in various parts of America, from Hudson's Bay as far as

Carolina, migrating from one place to another, according to the seasons. It breeds on high and heathy mountains: the female lays four eggs, of a pale olive colour, variegated with blackish spots. They fly in small flocks, and make a shrill whistling noise, by an imitation of which they are sometimes enticed within gun-shot. The male and female do not differ from each other. In young birds the yellow spots are not very distinguishable, as the plumage inclines more to grey.

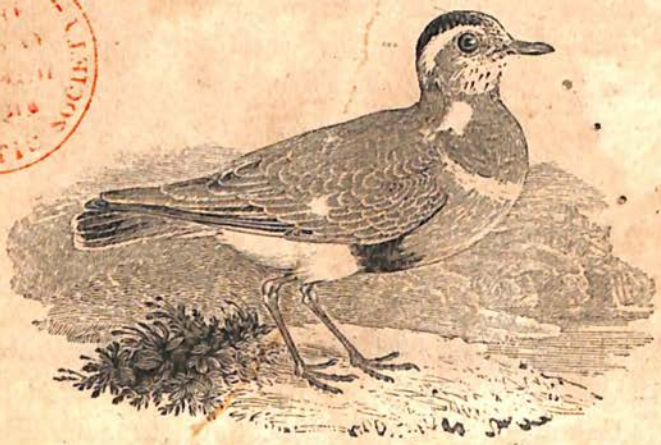
THE GREY PLOVER.

(*Tringa Squatarola*, Lin.—*Le Vanneau Pluvier*, Buff.)

THE length of this bird is about twelve inches. Its bill is black; the head, back, and wing coverts are of a dusky brown, edged with greenish ash colour, and some with white; the cheeks and throat are white, marked with oblong dusky spots; the belly, thighs, and rump are white; the sides are marked with a few dusky spots; the outer webs of the quills are black, the lower parts of the inner webs of the first four are white; the tail is marked with alternate bars of black and white: the legs are of a dull green; the hind toe is small. In the *Planches Enluminees* this bird is represented with eyes of an orange colour; there is likewise a dusky line extending from the bill underneath each eye, and a white one above it.

We have placed this bird with the Plovers, as agreeing with them in every other respect but that of having a very small hind toe; but this is so slight a difference as not to render it necessary to exclude it from a place in the Plover family, to which it evidently belongs. The

Grey Plover is not very common in Britain; it appears sometimes in small flocks on the sea-coasts: it is somewhat larger than the Golden Plover. Its flesh is said to be very delicate.



THE DOTTEREL.

(Charadrius Morinellus, Lin.—*Le Guignard*, Buff.*)*

THE length of this bird is about nine inches. Its bill is black; eyes dark, large, and full; its forehead is mottled with brown and white; top of the head black; over each eye an arched line of white passes to the hinder part of the neck; the cheeks and throat are white; the back and wings are of a light brown, inclining to olive, each feather margined with pale rust colour; the quills are brown; the fore part of the neck is surrounded by a broad band of a light olive colour, bordered on the under side with white; breast is of a pale dull orange; middle of the belly black; the rest of the belly, thighs, and vent, are of a reddish white; the tail is of an olive

brown, black near the end, and tipped with white, the outer feathers are margined with white: the legs are of a dark olive colour.

The Dotterel is common in various parts of Great Britain, though in some places it is scarcely known. They are supposed to breed in the mountains of Cumberland and Westmoreland, where they are sometimes seen in the month of May, during the breeding season; they likewise breed on several of the Highland hills: they are very common in Cambridgeshire, Lincolnshire, and Derbyshire, appearing in small flocks on the heaths and moors of those counties during the months of May and June, and are then very fat, and much esteemed for the table. It is said that the Dotterel is so very stupid a bird, as to be taken with the most simple artifice, and that it was formerly the custom to decoy them into the net by stretching out a leg or an arm, which caught the attention of the birds, so that they returned it by a similar motion of a leg or a wing, and were not aware till the net dropped and covered the whole flock. At present the more sure method of the gun has superseded this artifice.

THE RING DOTTEREL.

RING PLOVER, OR SEA LARK.

(*Charadrius Hiaticula*, Lin.—*Le petit Pluvier à collier*, Buff.)

THE length is rather more than seven inches. The bill is of an orange colour, tipped with black; the eyes are dark hazel; a black line passes from the bill, underneath each eye, and spreads over the cheeks; above this a line of white extends across the forehead to the eyes; this is bounded above by a black fillet across the head; a gorget of black encircles the neck, very broad on the fore part, but growing narrow behind, above which, to the chin, is white; the top of the head is of a light brown ash colour, as are also the back, scapulars, and coverts; the greater coverts are tipped with white; the breast and all the under parts are white; the quills are dusky, with an oval white spot about the middle of each feather, which forms, when the wings are closed, a stroke of white down each; the tail is of a dark brown, tipped with white, the two outer feathers almost white: the

legs are of an orange colour; claws black. In the female, the white on the forehead is less; there is more white on the wings, and the plumage inclines more to ash colour.

These birds are common in all the northern countries; they migrate into Britain in the spring, and depart in autumn: they frequent the sea-shores during summer, and run nimbly along the sands, sometimes taking short flights, accompanied with loud twitterings, then alight and run again: if disturbed they fly quite off. They are said to make no nest: the female lays four eggs, of a pale ash colour, spotted with black, which she deposits on the ground.

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